

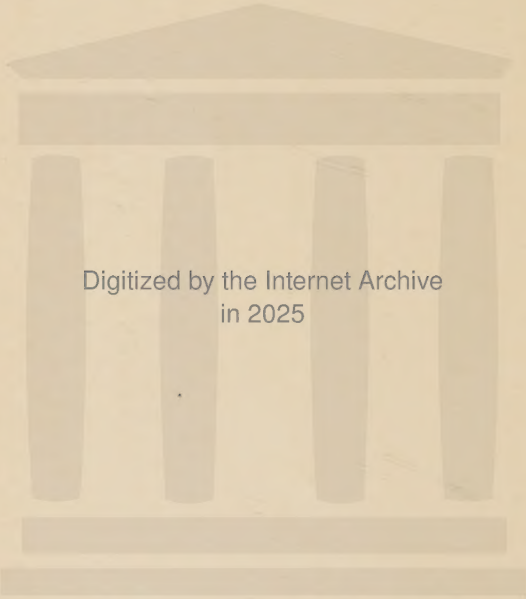
HANDBOOK
for
ELDERS and DEACONS

BY
R. C. HARDING

Price, 50 cents

THE STANDARD PUBLISHING COMPANY
CINCINNATI, O.





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I Cor. 9:16.

Matt. 16:26.

I Tim. 6:11-12

HANDBOOK

for

Elders *and* Deacons

By R. C. HARDING

*For Convenient Reference and
for Class Study*

THE STANDARD PUBLISHING COMPANY
CINCINNATI, O.

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ROANOKE BIBLE COLLEGE

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Elizabeth City, N. C.

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FOREWORD

THE purpose of this book is, in a measure, to do for the local churches of Christ what leadership-training books have done for the church school.

That there is a great need of something along this line but few will doubt. That it should be simple and practicable, almost all will admit.

The plans and methods herein presented are the result of much experimentation and observation, as well as reading most everything that has been written on the subject.

Much help has been received from the following books:

“The Christian System,” by A. Campbell.

“Church Polity,” by W. L. Hayden.

“The Church of Christ,” by A Layman.

“How to Set the Church in Order,” by Martin L. Pierce.

“The Training of the Church,” by S. S. Lappin.

“The New Testament Church,” by Herbert Moninger.

“The Disciples: an Interpretation,” by B. A. Abbott.

“Fundamentals of Prosperity,” by Roger Babson.

“The Eldership,” by M. M. Davis.

“The Scheme of Redemption,” by Robert Milligan.

“The Training of the Officers,” by George E. Lyon.

Charles Darsie, H. H. Peters and John D. Zimmerman have made a number of valuable suggestions which have been incorporated. We are greatly indebted to the foregoing books and these outstanding church workers, but we are indebted even more to E. W. Thornton, who so patiently and painstakingly has edited the material and prepared it for the printer. But for him, the book would not have appeared in its present pleasingly readable style.

With a prayer from the heart that this little book may be a real source of help and inspiration to preachers, and more especially to the officers of the local churches of Christ, we send it forth trusting that our common Lord can use it in helping to answer the prayer He taught us regarding the kingdom of God on earth becoming as that which is in heaven.

HANDBOOK FOR ELDERS AND DEACONS

LESSON I.

THE NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH

Its Nature

1. The Church a Spiritual Body.

Christ is the head of the body, the church (Col. 1:18), and referring to the church Paul says there is one body (Eph. 4:4). This being the case, the church is really a spiritual body or fellowship. It is not primarily an organization. It is a body of persons who, having united with Christ, form a brotherhood. It uses such organization as the Scriptures designate, and such additional organizations as will be effective in building the kingdom.

Any one, who by an intelligent and obedient faith has accepted Jesus Christ and been baptized into Him, is a member of His church. Whenever a number of such mem-

bers of the body of our Lord dwell in a given community they constitute the church of Christ in that community, organized or unorganized; but to do the effective work described in the New Testament they must "assemble themselves together" for work, worship and mutual edification.

The New Testament describes the simple, apostolic plan of choosing elders and deacons to see that this responsible, co-operative Christian life is lived in orderly fashion.

2. Also a Spiritual Building.

That the church is a spiritual building is plainly taught by Paul (Eph. 2:19-22). Now the beauty and endurance of any structure, spiritual or material, depend upon its foundation. The finest building ever erected, if built upon sand, soon will crumble and fall, but if built upon solid rock will endure through the ages. In the very beginning of this discussion we must find a sound rock foundation upon which to build. The church, being divine, must have a divine foundation. The church is built upon the rock, Christ Jesus. If it is built on Him, we must, of course, turn to His teaching for ultimate authority.

In one New Testament figure Jesus is the "head of the body, the church" (Col. 1:18). In another figure He is the "chief corner stone" (Eph. 2:19, 20). We here are interested in His being the builder of the church (Matt. 16:18).

3. The Builder's Authority.

A builder has authority over his own building. He has power to build or to tear down. It is his. God ordained it so. There are but two rules of authority, therefore, for all that shall be said in these discussions. The apostle Paul, in writing to the Corinthian church (1 Cor. 10:23), states clearly the two principles of lawfulness and expediency. Therefore, in seeking to restore the New Testament church, we must find that which is lawful according to the New Testament and also that which is expedient.

Paul, in illustrating this at one time, said: "If meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth" (1 Cor. 8:13). Paul meant that it was lawful to eat meat, but, because of the fact that it might offend a brother, and thus become a stumbling-block to one weaker than he, it would not be expedient for him to do so.

Where our Lord Himself speaks, His word is final. His authority is ultimate. We have no recourse but to obey. His word regarding the organization and administration of His church is just as essential as it is with regard to doctrinal, theological or social matters. His law is a constructive law. He is always building. If, however, by His building that which is perfect, the imperfect should be destroyed, it still is constructive truth that prevails.

It is not impossible to obey our divine Architect's plans and specifications. They are not impracticable in this or in any other age. Of course, there may have to be adaptation to local conditions, while there is obedience to the general law as it has been given.

4. Law and Order in the Church.

The church is an institution of law and order. Being spiritual in purpose, it is a divine institution, and, being divine, should set an example to all other institutions, not only as to life and morals, but as to orderliness. The apostle Paul, in speaking of this matter to one of the churches, once said: "Let all things be done decently and in order" (1 Cor. 14:40). We notice in the study

of the Scriptures that whatever God has done, He has done decently and in orderly fashion. "He doeth all things well."

At the close of each creative day, God took an inventory of His work and pronounced it good. David bore testimony to this when he said: "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament showeth his handiwork" (Ps. 19:1). In the heavens above we see precision and system, governed by laws infinitely perfect. This is equally true of the earth, where there is abundant evidence of an orderly divine plan.

Since God is a God of order, and all His work is methodical and systematic, it seems a pity that in His name the people who claim to be His children and His servants should do His work crudely and without order and efficiency. Roger Babson, the noted statistician, has well said that while "the church has the greatest opportunity to-day of any industry, it is the least developed, the most inefficiently operated and the most backward in its methods."

5. Disorder Unchristian.

In some non-Christian lands, there are multitudes of ignorantly religious zealots

who believe they are proving their religion by their disorder and their uncleanness. The religion of Christ tends toward order, beauty and system. Our God is a God of order. But how is our loyalty to Him shown by slovenly business habits in managing the affairs of His church? Does the New Testament anywhere put a premium upon inefficiency and carelessness?

The church often is in disrepute and loses its power, by its failure to see to it that all things are done "in decency and in order." In the business world there is not a single great enterprise that could run for one year without failure if it used the slipshod methods of many of the churches. Yes, God is with His people, but His church often carries on in spite of its inefficient methods, and not because of them.

God will not suffer His church to be destroyed, but think what we could do if we were working with plain efficiency and order. If as a people we have been able, in something over one hundred years, to organize and to operate nine thousand churches or more in which are a million and a half of members, and through which we have made

known the New Testament plea for the unity of God's people, what might we have done by working in unity and in order?

If in the beginning of the past century, when our fathers were restoring New Testament baptism and communion and the name of the church, and other things that we hold dear and sacred, they also had restored the divine and logical organization for the New Testament congregation, what a boon it would have been!

6. Expediency.

An oft-quoted statement of the fathers of the Restoration was: "Where the Scriptures speak we speak, and where the Scriptures are silent we are silent." With regard to faith and doctrine this is true, but with regard to the organization and administration of the church it is incomplete. Here we should say, "Where the Scriptures speak we speak, and where the Scriptures are silent we use discretion."

Expediency has as much place in the operation of the work of the Lord as it does in the living of a life. Hence, we must carefully search out that expedient which will be the most useful. Methods of work for the

church of Jesus Christ must be effective. It must be understood that in no way shall these expedients conflict with anything which is of divine appointment.

The New Testament, in speaking of churches, does not speak specifically of furnaces and stoves to keep the buildings warm. We have found it expedient to provide these for the comfort of the worshipers. Neither does the New Testament definitely speak of pews or hymnbooks, or instrumental music or choirs. But, because we have found these things to be expedient, we are using them with good results, and yet we are not in conflict with the Divine Word.

Its Origin

1. Preparation.

Already we have seen that, in the building of any temple or any great structure, there must be a well-laid foundation. God would not teach us to build well, and then fail to follow His own teaching. For centuries before the coming of Christ the Spirit of God was in the world. "All things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself" (2 Cor.

5:18). "The law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ" (Gal. 3:24). The prophets frequently foretold His coming and the establishment of His church upon earth. Greek learning later gave an impetus to scholarship and studious investigation.

Finally John the Baptist came to prepare the way of the Lord, and baptized thousands of souls unto repentance, that, when the founder and organizer of this new institution should come, there would be some material on hand ready to use in the divine structure.

2. The Master Builder.

Born in Bethlehem, reared in Nazareth, baptized of John in Jordan, Jesus began His public ministry. He fulfilled and completed the old, and introduced and began the new. This new institution is the New Testament church, which interests us. Jesus said: "Before Abraham was, I am." John the beloved said: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God" (John 1:1, 2).

That Jesus was coexistent with the Father, before He was known as Jesus, is very evident from these Scriptures and a

number of others in the New Testament. He came to fulfill the Mosaic law. He said: "Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled" (Matt. 5:18). The Holy Spirit could not establish the new until the old had given way, making a place for the new. Perhaps the antecedent of the pronoun "it," in that wonderful statement of our Lord, "It is finished" (John 19:30), refers to the work which He came to fulfill or complete—His earthly ministry.

3. The Master's Orders.

He said to His apostles: "Tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high" (Luke 24:49). Then: "Ye shall be my witnesses both in Jerusalem and in all Judæa, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1:8). "When the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with

the Holy Spirit, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance" (Acts 2:1-4).

4. Launching the Church.

Peter preached the first gospel sermon to the multitudes assembled on Pentecost. He impressed upon their reluctant consciences the fact that they had crucified their Messiah. He rehearsed proofs they could not set aside. "They were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?" (Acts 2:37). And the Holy Spirit, speaking through Peter, said: "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:38). "Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls" (Acts 2:41). In the midst of manifestations of divine power the church of Jesus Christ thus came into existence.

Among days on which, in the providence of God, men have done epoch-making things, the day of Pentecost is supreme.

Its Ordinances

There are two ordinances which Christ commands and expects His followers to perpetuate. In 1 Cor. 15:1-4, Paul sums up the gospel in three events—the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ. These three events are symbolized in the two ordinances we are here considering. Genuine loyalty will prompt due observance of both.

1. Baptism.

The elders and deacons of any church of Christ should be familiar with the Scriptural authority for baptism. In the Great Commission our Lord ordained baptism (Matt. 28:18-20), and His own baptism is recorded in Matt. 3:13-17; Mark 1:9-11; Luke 3:21, 22. In Acts 8:35-39 is a description of the way New Testament baptism was performed. This description is borne out in Heb. 10:22. John 3:5 figures baptism as a birth; Col. 2:12 makes it the symbol of a burial; Rom. 6:4 sets it forth in the form of a resurrection.

2. The Lord's Table.

In the New Testament, that which the Lord told His apostles to do “in memory”

The New Testament Church

of Him is to observe "the Lord's supper." It is not called a sacrament. The eating of the "bread" is called "the communion of the body of Christ." The drinking of the "cup" is called "the communion of the blood of Christ." The cup is called the "cup of the Lord" and the "cup of blessing" and "the fruit of the vine." This cup is nowhere referred to as wine. Our Lord used the figurative expression "my blood." This is a divinely sacred memorial. "The privilege of coming to the Lord's table does not rest upon our moral goodness, but upon our being the adopted sons and daughters of the Most High."

Its Purpose and Mission

1. A Great Program.

The purpose of the church is to spread the gospel, to inform the world, to build character, to eliminate suffering and to save souls for eternity. This is to be done both individually and collectively. The church is made up of people. It is made up of those who, both by precept and example, must try to save the world, helping one

another as brethren in the accomplishment of this glorious end.

It is not enough to have a fine, well-equipped church-house. There must be souls well equipped with a knowledge of the Word of life and with the zeal to make it known to the world.

2. A Great Method.

The church that tries to compete with the world in worldly things eventually must be defeated. Attempts to rival the picture show in an effort to bring people to the house of worship can not but fail. There must be a great method, but not the show method. "Let all things be done unto edifying." The Jerusalem disciples "continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread and in prayers." "And the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly."

Wholesome recreation may be provided and edifying fellowship enjoyed, but the rarest and most compelling influence in the world is that of sincere Christlikeness of character and conduct shown by His genuine followers.

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The New Testament Church

The quiet, unassuming effectiveness of sheer godliness of life and sincere devotion will prove to be a method that is more than a method—rather a super method—of extending the kingdom.

Questions on Lesson I.

1. In the light of New Testament teaching, how would you define the church of Christ?

2. If the church may be described as a spiritual fellowship and building, what is its foundation?

3. Whose voice is the voice of authority in the church?

4. Give some arguments and Scriptural authority for the observance of law and order in the church?

5. In matters concerning which the Scriptures are silent, what principle should be observed?

6. By what process did the Spirit of God prepare for the founding of the church?

7. How did Jesus begin His public ministry?

8. Why did the Master tell His disciples to tarry in Jerusalem?

9. Describe what took place on the day of Pentecost.

10. What is the one outstanding fact for which Pentecost stands?

11. What does each of the two great ordinances symbolize?

12. Why should elders and deacons be familiar with the Scriptural authority for baptism and the Lord's Supper?

13. Upon what must the church chiefly depend in its efforts to win and save the world?

LESSON II.

LOCAL CHURCHES OF CHRIST

Personnel and Fellowship

1. The Congregation.

From Corinth, the chief city of Achaia, Paul wrote a letter to the church at Rome. In the last chapter of this letter, he said: "The churches of Christ salute you." This shows that there were several churches in the province of Achaia, and that they all desired to be remembered to the Roman brethren.

Undoubtedly there was a fine fellowship among the churches in the entire region of Paul's activities, for, in his letter to the brethren in Corinth, he said: "The churches of Asia salute you."

While the apostle very evidently promoted among the churches a cordial interest in one another, there is no evidence that he set up any superorganization over them. Therefore, each congregation was arbiter of

its own local affairs. It formed such organization as the apostles had directed. We are under obligation to do the same.

But, as civilization has become more and more complex, we have found it *expedient* to adopt *within the congregation* such organized plans of co-operation as will help the church most effectively to do the Lord's work. Hence the Bible school and other local societies.

2. The Preacher.

In our modern churches the preacher stands at the head of the *personnel* of the congregation's leadership. Scripturally, he is an evangelist, because an evangelist is a herald. He may, when necessary, do the work of an elder or even of a deacon, at which time he is a pastor (shepherd) or a minister, but primarily he is the man with the message, and therefore an evangelist.

Paul, in writing to Timothy, instead of directing him to do the work of a pastor, instructed him in the work of an evangelist. Neither Timothy nor Titus was referred to as a pastor, but the references clearly indicate that both were preachers—messengers. They were heralds of the glad tidings.

3. Elders and Deacons.

Then, in addition to the preacher, there are the pastors, or elders, whose work is to *shepherd* and *oversee* the members of the flock and the needs of the community. In the New Testament the word "pastor" means "shepherd." Also, there are deacons and deaconesses, or public servants of the church. But the larger group in the local church, the rest of the membership, we usually call the laity, but the term is not in the New Testament. Certain organizations we often deem it expedient to create, though entirely unmentioned in the New Testament. They will be discussed in other chapters.

Church Membership

1. Household of God.

Scripturally and logically, all members of the body of Christ are members automatically of the local church of Christ, or "household of God" (Eph. 2:19). They are members wherever they have established their residence. If church membership is a matter of placing letters, then membership, as R. L. Porter says, may be kept in a trunk.

But as fellowship can not be kept there, so neither can membership.

When the disciples of any community bind themselves together to organize into a Scriptural, local church of Christ, they covenant together to keep the ordinances of the Lord, to proclaim His gospel, to work and pray for the redemption of the lost, to glorify the “name which is above every name,” and to hasten the day when all shall “know the Lord . . . from the least of them even unto the greatest,” when “the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ,” and when Christ shall rule and reign supreme in every land, in every home and in every heart.

2. The Matter of Legally Incorporating.

The church of Christ, as set forth in the New Testament, is primarily a fellowship rather than an organization. A local congregation may or may not secure a charter of legal incorporation. This is a matter to be determined by wisdom and expediency. But be it remembered that it is not the legal status that makes it a church of Christ.

As to honors, charter members are worthy of honor—just as other members are worthy

of honor—in proportion to their fidelity to their Lord. There is no aristocracy of priority, no seeking after distinction and precedence, within the fellowship of a church of Christ patterned after the New Testament.

3. Additions.

Members usually are added according to the evangelistic activity of the church, or the strength and genuineness of its fellowship, or both.

1. While it may be conceded that those who are members of the body of Christ should be considered members of the local church wherever they locate, there is often a modifying condition. If the local church of Christ is a legally incorporated organization, as well as a Scriptural body, those who unite with it must give their consent to be enrolled as members. They will go forward at the time of invitation, and on behalf of the congregation will be received and welcomed by the minister or elders, or both. Necessary records of the names and other vital matters are kept in the record books of the local church.

Some members thus received may have letters of introduction from the churches

from which they come. Others may not have such letters. In the latter case, it is customary to enroll them as members upon their statement of the place of their previous membership.

2. Those who unite with the body of the Lord by confession of their faith and baptism into Christ sometimes are formally received into the congregation by being given the "hand of fellowship."

4. Welcome.

There may be a reception of new recruits—in fact, there should be if any considerable number enter at a given time. The church may arrange for a general social occasion where the new members have an opportunity to become acquainted and to enjoy the warmth of social welcome. Such meetings greatly enhance the spirit of fellowship.

In an earlier day it was customary for one who had made the good confession and been baptized to "receive the hand of fellowship" at the following church service. This was an occasion of formal welcome when all the members present went forward and shook hands with the new member or members of their spiritual household. Later, in-

stead of this, it became the practice of the minister to welcome the new member on behalf of the congregation, admonishing the church to a continuous practice of cordiality and good will.

To become a Christian means vastly more than going forward and having the name enrolled, and to become a member of the church means much more than being formally received and registered. One can scarcely be counted a member of the local church until he has been taken into the hearts and lives of the members, who manifest the kindly feeling that "we be brethren."

5. Dismissal.

We have noticed the manner in which members are added, and we must now notice the manner in which they are dismissed. Of course, when any member of the congregation has passed into the life beyond, that member's name is automatically dropped and so indicated in the records.

Those who move out of the community and establish their residence elsewhere may ask for letters, or may not. But, unless they keep in touch in some way with the church to which they belong, it is impos-

sible for that church properly to shepherd them, or for them to feel themselves genuinely members there. If they keep in touch by regular financial support and frequent letters of good will, they should be marked as non-resident members.

Unless circumstances make it entirely impracticable, they should identify themselves with the church in the community to which they have moved.

If their location should become lost entirely, the church clerk should state the fact in the records. They have dismissed themselves by removal and failure to report. If they should ever ask for letters, a statement of the facts may be granted.

There should be no desire on the part of the church to pad its rolls. It is unbusinesslike, confusing and foolish to carry on your rolls the names of persons who really have severed all relationship with the congregation.

6. Deserters.

There is yet one more type of dismissal. It is the type made up of those who spiritually and actually desert the church. There are not many of these, but, if earnest investigation

proves them to be deserters beyond anybody's ability to restore them, nothing is left to be done except to drop their names and make them subjects of prayer.

Three Classes of Members

1. Active.—In almost every church there may be said to be three classes of members. The first and most important of these is made up of the active members. These are the ones who are in full fellowship and in good standing because of their character and works. They are regular in their attendance, they are faithful and unselfish in their support. Unstintingly they give of themselves, their time and their means. They are “the salt of the earth.” Without them no church could long exist. In proportion to their abilities, spiritual, intellectual, physical and financial, and in proportion to their number, members of this group will determine the success of the church.

2. Slightly Active.

These are the ones who attend occasionally, but who could attend regularly if they so desired. They may or may not manifest

a willingness to give a little for the support of the church. They claim to belong. Measured by what they do they may be worth counting, but that is about all. Such "members" are a field rather than a force; at least they are not a force for constructive righteousness. They are in great danger of becoming less and less active until finally they become inactive or drop away altogether.

3. Inactive.

These do not attend unless perhaps when there is an entertainment or a supper or a funeral. They are backsliders and often do not know it. The only time they claim membership is when they are about to die. It is most certain that in the obituary their friends will record them as members, and, unless the preacher in charge is careful, he will find himself saying that the departed "joined the church at such a time and was a faithful member until the day of his death."

Co-operation

1. The Main Reason for It.

The main reason for congregational fellowship is co-operation. To bear one an-

other's burdens, to encourage one another and thus be helpers—each a helper of the others—is the object. If this is true of individuals in a given congregation, it likewise is true of congregations.

Churches of Christ, being “of like faith and order,” should by all means co-operate internationally, nationally, in the State, in the district, in the county and in the city. This co-operation should not be an over-lording ecclesiasticism, but in all things should be in harmony with the letter and spirit of Scripture. “We be brethren,” even though we may be separated by thousands of miles. The essential interests of each are the interest of all. The essential hope of one is the hope of the rest.

2. Democracy.

When our churches come to realize that the members of other churches of Christ are their brethren as well as the members of their own congregation, there will be a saving in means, in time and in souls. Frequently, in near-by communities, there are small, struggling congregations, no one of which is able to carry on in a large way. They have not financial strength to keep a man in the field

for full time, and yet are not willing to co-operate with their brethren for the benefit of all. In this regard we have not learned how to use our democracy to the best advantage.

3. Independency or Supervision.

When there are several churches of Christ in the same general territory employing preachers from a distance who have to pass one another on their way to their several rural or village appointments, people wonder why there is such wasteful lack of system. They are apt to say: "Why don't these people work out some overhead scheme of management?"

This brings up an old, old point of discussion which has caused much bitterness—extreme local church independency on the one hand and extreme ecclesiastical bossism on the other. The New Testament local congregation occupied the golden mean: It was independent in the sense that its freedom was in Christ, and it was under authority in the sense that it was subject to Christ. "Christ was all and in all," and real Christians can plan a scheme of co-operation that will work.

4. The Lord's Way.

The divinely appointed way of ironing out a situation like that referred to would be for the churches to foster spiritual interest, fellowship, solicitude and co-operation among themselves, and tackle the problem in the spirit of the Master.

Not only should these churches co-operate with one another, but in so far as they can they should co-operate with other religious faiths in matters that are of common interest. Likewise they should support every community movement that plainly will eventuate in the uplift and betterment of the people.

Questions on Lesson II.

1. In Paul's letters and messages, what proves the New Testament church to have been a fellowship and not an ecclesiasticism?

2. To what extent was each New Testament congregation the arbiter of its own local affairs?

3. In our modern local churches, who is regarded as the leader?

4. What may be the activities of the preacher?

5. What officers does the New Testament authorize the local church to select?

6. Is there any reason why all members of the body of Christ should not automatically be considered members of the local church?

7. What covenant is automatically made when members of Christ's body live in the same community?

8. What is to be said about legally incorporating the local church of Christ?

9. What about honors, priority and distinctions within the local church fellowship?

10. How are those received who newly have been baptized or have come from a sister congregation?

11. What methods should be used in dismissing persons from the congregation's membership?

12. What should the local congregation do with reference to deserters?

13. What do you understand to be meant by the term "Christian fellowship"?

14. How may the principles of independence and supervision be balanced?

15. Describe the three classes of members usually found in a church.

LESSON III.

THE LOCAL CONGREGATION

Its Value and Mission

1. The Local Church Is Needed.

There should be Christians in all communities, and these Christians should regularly assemble in local congregations. The local church affords the right opportunity for systematic service, for worship, for the preaching of the gospel, and for teaching the truth and winning souls to Christ.

Through its activities funds are assembled for religious work at home and abroad. It is a clearing-house for all things religious and moral. The apostles and the early Christians, under apostolic direction, established and maintained local churches. It is the Lord's plan.

2. It Gives Value to the Community.

When a local church is made up and conducted according to Scripture precedent, it

easily becomes the most vital feature of the community's life. It takes the lead in fostering faith in God and good will among men; it stands for everything that is right and opposes everything that is wrong.

Therefore the very presence of a church building tones up a community; its influence is a benediction; it makes property more valuable and adds to the desirability of the community as a place of residence. You would not live and rear a family where there is no church.

Money given by individuals to erect a house of God is really an investment. The various values that it enhances are far greater than the cost of building and maintenance.

The Local Church at Work

1. Its Organization.

Not only is there a need of a local church in every community, but each local church has needs of its own that are varied and many. It needs, first of all, effective, Scriptural, logical organization—an organization that is not simply for the sake of organization and that is not an end in itself, but an

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organization that is only the means to an end. The organization should be no more complex than is absolutely necessary to solve the problems of its particular community. In machinery we have found that the simpler the machine, the better. Christ's church is not a machine, but its organization is the simplest possible.

2. Its Leadership.

The local church has a great need, in this day, for local leadership. Our preachers, more now than in the past, are becoming better equipped educationally and better trained for their work, but the local leadership is not keeping pace with the advancement of the preachers. A church does not have to possess great wealth to do a great work. All it needs is proper leadership and guidance.

In war, of course, the fighting must be done by the private soldiers, but the private soldier, in spite of his heroism, bravery and efficiency, is bound to fail unless he has a wise and capable general to plan the battles and lead the way. Many a battle has been lost, not because of poor soldiers, but because of poor leaders.

3. Its Equipment.

Then, there must be equipment. There must be adequate building facilities, provided especially for the religious needs of the community. An auditorium is not enough. The old-time, oblong-square, one-room building does not meet the requirements of our age. An auditorium is one of the needs, and ought to be commodious, comfortable and pleasant. It ought to be a real sanctuary and not a mere public hall. To take the sanctity out of the sanctuary is to take the fire out of the fireplace. But, in addition to the auditorium or main room for public worship, there should be enough other rooms to meet the social and educational needs of the church.

Then, there should be other equipment according to demand, such as maps, books, blackboards, tables, graded chairs, desks, musical instruments, baptismal robes, and various other things that might be needed in order to do the work of the Lord effectively.

Last, but not least of the great needs of the local church, is the need of proper financing. It takes money to build houses, arrange

rooms, buy equipment, operate furnaces, pay for lights and provide all the paraphernalia necessary to successful operation—to say nothing of salaries. Devoting time and money to the ample development of Christian character is the best investment any community can make, therefore the support of the church should be looked upon as a privilege.

Discipline

1. What Is Discipline?

Ordinarily discipline is looked upon as the treatment accorded to backsliding members; it is that and more. Each local church, with regard to the operation of its own affairs, has authority in these affairs so long as it acts according to the New Testament. Therefore, the New Testament is the book of discipline.

But discipline primarily means training, and to exercise discipline is to teach. We have been clearly shown that, in case a member becomes delinquent in character and in his duties to his Lord and the church, the elders should admonish such a one (2 Thess. 3:15). If they fail to restore him (Gal. 6:

1) to his right mind and to fellowship in the church, they might give others opportunity, but, if all efforts fail, it seems expedient to recognize the fact that he himself has destroyed his fellowship with the church, and so enter it upon the records. (Read Matt. 18:15).

2. A Doubtful Practice.

The wisdom of publicly declaring persons as dropped from membership in the church is doubtful. Paul says to "withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly," but the words mean to avoid chumming with such a brother. Shun intimacy with him; this may bring him to his senses. Be it remembered, however, that it is the disorderly brother himself who has broken the tie of fellowship, and right counsel might restore him.

3. A Matter of Inference.

Discipline, after all, largely is a matter of inference as applied to members who seem hopelessly unruly. The New Testament does not say much about it. While Paul says to warn them that are unruly (1 Thess. 5:14), he also says for the "spiritual" to restore those who are "overtaken in any trespass" (Gal. 6:1, R. V.).

At any rate, discipline means instruction more than it means rebuke, and if churches were careful to teach all new members and “admonish one another” as brethren, there would be less trouble.

Church Letters

1. A Church Letter Should Tell the Truth.

The church letter has little Scriptural warrant, and probably has been more of a nuisance than a blessing. It usually is a formal letter of introduction and recommendation as to the standing and fellowship of one to whom it is given. Most certainly the things a church letter says ought to be true. The common form of church letter is about as follows:

The church of Christ at Parkburg hereby sends Christian greetings, and certifies that George Strong has been baptized into Christ and holds fellowship with this congregation. We cordially commend him to your Christian love and good will.

This letter is granted by order of the church this..... day of, 19.....

Often a letter is requested by a member who has been gone from the community and been out of touch with the church for years. Perhaps even previous to his leaving the

community he attended only occasionally and contributed practically nothing to the support of the church.

Because it is a matter of form, the church authorizes a letter to be sent at his request, and he is introduced and recommended to a group of Christians as one who is loyal and true. Such, too often is the meaning of "good standing and full fellowship."

A church clerk should think twice before he puts his name to a letter that is untruthful. Perhaps a church letter should always be given when asked for, but not all letters should make the same statement.

Really, it seems to us, a church letter should simply and briefly state the Christian character and activities of the member to whom it is given. If there has been exceptional loyalty, mention it. If there has been great ability, and that ability has been devoted to the Lord, note the fact.

2. Should Assume That It Will Be Placed.

Every church letter should assume that the one to whom it is given will, as soon as possible, present it where he can continue his fellowship. Sometimes the holder of a letter puts it away in the Bible, puts the

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Bible in a trunk, puts the trunk in the attic, and leaves it there in cold storage.

It is still a letter, however, and he claims still to be a Christian. Possibly he is, but he is short on Christian fellowship. He goes or does not go to church, as he sees fit, but, when asked by some local member to place his membership, he says: "I belong to the church back home, and my letter states that I shall be considered a member there until they are notified that I have united elsewhere.

If the letter makes such a statement, has not this church encouraged this "brother" to become faithless? A letter unused means practically nothing. It possesses only a has-been value. A non-located membership indicates a non-enjoyed fellowship.

Members' Respect for Officers

1. A Rule that Works Both Ways.

We often hear of the officers' duties to the church, but we seldom hear of the duties of the members to the officers. It has been said, "It is a poor rule that does not work both ways." Certainly the officers do have

a number of very vital duties to the church membership. On the other hand, the church-members have at least two very vital duties to the church officary—respect and co-operation.

In Heb. 13:17 we have the injunction of the Holy Spirit to the members of the church! “Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account.” Of course this “rule” is that of the shepherd over his flock. It is the exercise of spiritual oversight. Elders are not policemen, they are spiritual shepherds, and the Scriptures plainly indicate that the congregation is to respect their wise leadership. Certainly the best elders on earth can not exercise spiritual rule over the church unless the church is willing to be ruled.

2. Each Concerned in Welfare of All.

As to how elders should rule, we shall study later, but members should be ready and willing to follow their leaders in every right and reasonable thing. This is necessary that there may be unity and strength.

In any well-regulated family, domestic peace is insured when each of its members is

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unselfish enough to consider the welfare and happiness of all the rest. The congregation is a large family. There must be much giving up, much adaptation, and constant dependence upon the wisdom of God. We are taught to bear with one another in Christian love. If the members of the churches would carefully select their officers, and then observe the true meaning of Heb. 13:17 as religiously as they do Acts 2:38 or Rom. 6:4, there would be fewer broken congregations. There must be a reawakened interest on the part of the churches, or New Testament Christianity will perish from the earth.

Questions on Lesson III.

1. Why is a local church needed in a community?
2. What effect does the presence of a church building have upon the community?
3. If a church organizes beyond the selection of elders and deacons, what should be the features added?
4. What do you think is the duty of the local church in preparing leaders for the future as well as training them to meet present needs?

5. What are the arguments in favor of better church buildings and better equipment?

6. What is church discipline?

7. If discipline means teaching, how many churches measure up to their needs and opportunities?

8. When is the practice of withdrawal of fellowship justified?

9. What are the dictates of good common sense in the matter of church letters?

10. Is it the best practice for members to hold their membership in one community while living in another?

11. Why should exceeding care be taken in the selection of church officers?

12. What is the importance of a reawakened interest on the part of the church of Jesus Christ?

LESSON IV.

THE PREACHER

His Vocation and What It Means

1. Preaching Is a Calling.

The church at Rome was told that the gospel of Jesus Christ was the power of God unto salvation to every one that believed it. The gospel is the power, but the power must be released, and preaching is the release. "It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe" (1 Cor. 1:21). The gospel must also be given direction, and preaching gives that direction.

Preaching often has been miscalled a profession. In reality it is a calling. The preacher who looks upon his work as merely a profession is but a professional preacher. His preaching is without spirit and without power. But the preacher who feels that he has been called by opportunity, ability and an inner conviction that he simply must pro-

claim the most glorious news a sin-stricken world ever heard, usually becomes a man of power when he decides to preach.

2. Is the Call Extraordinary?

There have been many who believed that they were miraculously called to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ. We would not reflect upon the sincerity of their belief, but are unable to find either the necessity for it or the Scriptural justification. There is no doubt that some, by native endowment, are adapted to one vocation and some to another.

There is an illustration of this recorded in 1 Cor. 12:14-17. The church is there compared to our bodies, which have many members and all members have not the same office. If all were the eyes, there would be no hearing; if all were the ears, there would be no seeing. It is clearly shown that in this body of Christ there must be eyes to see, ears to hear and tongues with which to speak. Varied talents adapt people to a variety of pursuits.

But just how is the man to know that he is called to preach? Does he know in the same way that he knows he has been called to be an electrician or an artist or a musi-

cian? Yes, he knows this—and more. He knows that the gospel message has gotten such a grip on him that he simply can not be content not to preach. Like Paul, he says: “Woe is unto me if I preach not the gospel.”

Thus a man’s call to preach is a little more than a call to be a machinist or an electrician, in that there is an *impelling conscience* within him that drives him toward the ministry.

3. Or Is the Call Ordinary?

Primarily, it may be said that he is called by his native abilities—by his fitness to do the work which so high a vocation demands. Seldom is there a great desire in the heart of a man to adopt a life-work for which he has no talent whatever.

There are two points where the ability, aptitude, training and objectives of the ministry touch the interests of the officers of the local church. These two points make it necessary for elders and deacons to be well informed.

4. Where Elders and Deacons Come In.

First, the elders and deacons should be able to use wisdom in recommending a

preacher for the local church pulpit. It is not safe to leave so important a matter to chance or to haphazard experimenting.

Elders and deacons, therefore, should know the teaching of the Scriptures, and should know preachers and churches. This last knowledge is to be had through the church paper, which will be found on the home reading-tables of wide-awake elders and deacons, through attending conventions and through special, personal inquiry.

Second, the elders and deacons should encourage the most capable young men of their congregation to consider the high claims of the Christian ministry as a calling. The theaters, movies and unfriendly newspapers have long enough had their own way in seeking to cheapen the Christian ministry. Their diatribes should be challenged by every member of each and every board of officers in the church of Christ.

5. The Calling Is Complex.

The ministry to-day is a very complex calling. The minister must have varied abilities. He can not succeed merely because he has a fluent flow of language, nor solely because he is a good mixer. He should have

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organizing ability, financing ability, leadership, and, above all, the ability to proclaim the truth. Much, very much, depends upon his industry.

Certainly the preacher must feel with Paul, "Woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel!" (1 Cor. 9:16). Of all walks in life, there is none that is less crowded, neither is there any with greater opportunities. Those men are succeeding in the ministry who look upon it as a calling in which God offers special opportunities for honorable service to those who are impelled toward it and who prepare for it.

The wide-open door to this calling of God makes it imperative that the church shall discover, assist and encourage capable young men who might be convinced that they should preach the gospel.

The Purpose of the Ministry

1. To exemplify the Gospel.

First of all, we would say that the minister's most important function is that of being an example. Both Timothy and Titus, young preachers just beginning their min-

istry were exhorted by Paul, the experienced, Spirit-filled apostle, to be good examples for all those with whom they came in contact. Well has the sage of old said: "What you do speaks so loudly that I can not hear what you say." The example of the minister means more to the community than the finest and best things that he may say, if merely saying things is all that he does. "Actions speak louder than words."

Also, the minister by his conversation must show that he is an honor to his calling. Clean speech and right thinking are marks of Christian culture. They go far toward giving your preacher an honored place in your community.

2. To Teach as Well as Preach.

Primarily the preacher is a teacher. Strange as it may seem, our Lord was never referred to as a preacher, not even an evangelist, but He was "a teacher come from God" (John 3:2). "He taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes" (Matt. 7:29). The very title of "Master" means "teacher." Every preacher of the gospel to-day certainly has Jesus Christ for his ideal, and therefore must teach. That

which we call the "Sermon on the Mount" is really a lesson. Jesus, when he had sat down, opened his mouth and "taught" them (Matt. 5:2). Then follow the three chapters of the most marvelous teaching the world has on record.

Inasmuch as Jesus was a teacher, every one of His preachers should be a teacher. The preacher who does not teach, does not preach. The sermon that is not instructive, is not a sermon. Though your preacher may be an orator, he must at the same time be a teacher. Jesus surely was a leader in eloquence, yet He never ceased to be a teacher. He taught by lecture, conversation, example parable and question, and the good preacher of to-day will be able to do the same.

3. To Mobilize the Forces.

Because of the complex conditions of our modern church work, the preacher must also have ability to marshal his forces and put them to work. Not only must he know the particulars of good organization, but he must know how to set up and operate the particular kind his church needs in order to put over its practical, educational and evangelistic job.

Mentioning the need for organizing ability reminds us that it used to be said, "Preachers have no business sense." In a large measure this may have been true. But it can not be said to-day of many of the successful preachers. Even laymen will agree that the most difficult business to operate is the business of the church. Many laymen who succeed in the business of manufacturing, banking or merchandising make a dismal failure of the business of managing the church enterprise.

We call attention to this fact: men who are called in most every religious group to handle the biggest and most complicated, as well as the most difficult, financial work of the churches, are almost always preachers. And usually they have been selected by able business laymen. This is true in all religious bodies. Of course, there are preachers to-day who can not even manage their own business affairs, but so are there other men who can not. It is doubtful if there is a greater percentage of failures among preachers than among bankers, merchants or manufacturers.

Since the laymen have called this man to be their preacher, they expect him to lead

in things pertaining to the work of the church. This is part of his general success.

Securing a Minister

1. How to Go About It.

We are wondering to-day whether the church calls the preacher or the preacher calls the church. To be sure, it should be the former, but most every church clerk, where there is a vacant pulpit, receives from fifty to 150 applications. If there is a faint suspicion of "pull" now and then as a preacher tries to get a certain pulpit, it is the fault of our system—or lack of system. We have yet to work out a perfectly satisfactory solution of this preacher-calling business.

Perhaps if the church officers were as efficient and well organized as they should be, it would be otherwise; for in that case, before the public could know there was going to be a vacancy, the church board might be able to point out the man suited to the congregation's needs. They might also have learned of his willingness to accept.

Every church changing ministers ought to be able to do so as smoothly as trains are

able to change conductors, or conductors to change trains. Preacher, congregation and board should unite in preventing this change from being an upheaval.

Many a minister does a good work, and then all but destroys it in the manner in which he quits. Sometimes he closes well, and then the board of officers makes the next ministry difficult by the manner of selecting his successor.

2. A Matter for Care.

We would suggest that, when a church realizes that it is going to need a preacher, the elders should meet and decide upon the type of man that is needed for their community. They should learn from the deacons the financial condition of the church, and decide upon what seems to be the best remuneration they can provide. With this information at hand, they take pains to attend as many conventions and other preachers' meeting-places as possible. They also seek information by correspondence. They decide upon the man who, in their judgment, is the best man for the place. They ascertain if he is available, and bring about a conference with him. The elders recom-

mend him to the board, and the board recommends him to the church.

All this should be done with due courtesy to the church with which the preacher is located, and, if possible, without a "trial sermon." Usually trial sermons are well named. They are a trial to everybody concerned, and, if several preachers are asked to preach as "candidates," each candidate will have a following, and the congregation will be further than ever from the solution of its problem.

3. Indefinite Call.

Most preachers and churches, to-day, see the wisdom of the indefinite call, wherein either preacher or congregation may terminate the contract by a thirty, sixty or ninety days' notice. Therefore, the preacher when he accepts a call to another church, quietly notifies the members of his board that within the specified time he will close his ministry with them. This plan is not unscriptural, and generally will be found expedient.

The preacher who carries a bundle of recommendations is not acting so wisely as the one who uses only references, or simply depends upon his standing among

the brethren. Recommendations do not mean much. They are easily obtained.

4. When the New Preacher Arrives.

After the newly called minister arrives upon the field, instead of having the old-fashioned reception in which he often is a bored victim it would be much better to invite the neighboring ministers, and with dignity and honor properly install him in his ministry. A fitting service can be arranged that will give him a good introduction to the community, and gain much time by making him acquainted with the people among whom he is to do the work of a minister of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

If this can not be done on the Lord's Day, let it be done some week night, but make it as dignified and impressive as possible. Your preacher thus will be enabled to start his ministry with a sense of well-rounded support. This means much both to him and the church.

The Closing of a Ministry

1. Should Be Orderly.

We already have referred to the manner in which each preacher should be called, and

likewise to the manner of the termination of his ministry. In any event the utmost kindness and consideration should characterize both preacher and people. The ties that are being broken are too fine to justify carelessness or unconcern.

It generally has been conceded that ministries are entirely too short. Oftentimes the preacher is not yet ready to begin his best work when he quits, or the church has acquired the habit of short ministries and makes him quit. In most churches, it really takes two or three years to become acquainted with the field—to know the people, to know the needs, to know the possibilities, to know the opportunities. It takes equally as long for the people to know the preacher, and learn how conscientiously and trustfully to work under his leadership. A long ministry is fine, unless it is too long.

2. When It Should End.

When is a ministry too long? When the preacher has come to the place where he can not rally his people, when they will not follow his leadership, and when he can make no progress. Certainly, then, his pastorate should come to a close, and when he has

preached his last sermon, received his last check, and is minister of that church no longer, he has quit and should stay quit unless later called again by the church.

For members of a church to keep calling back former ministers for funerals and weddings, and for former ministers to encourage former congregations in this practice, is, to say the least, of doubtful wisdom.

'Tis true, a delicate question is involved. Individuals and families feel that they have a right to invite whom they please to officiate on certain sacred occasions. No hard-and-fast rule can be adopted.

It is the business of the elders and the minister to co-operate in bringing about an equitable adjustment of this matter, and congregational sentiment should be a help and not a hindrance.

3. The Preacher the Key Man.

In practically all things pertaining to the growth and activities of a church, "like priest, like people." In this connection Paul said: "I would to God . . . all that hear me this day, were both almost and altogether such as I am, except these bonds" (Acts 26: 29). So every preacher of the gospel should

feel. He should work to the end that all his flock should be such as he is, save his weaknesses.

As we raise our ideals concerning the ministry and as the preacher's work grows more efficient, we raise the ideals of the church. "Where there is no vision, the people perish" (Prov. 28:18). If our ideals are the ideals left us by our Lord and are firmly fixed, failure is next to impossible.

Questions on Lesson IV.

1. In what sense is a man called to the ministry?
2. What is the purpose of the ministry?
3. Is it true that preachers have no business ability?
4. What should be done to simplify the method of securing a minister?
5. What is to be said in favor of long ministries?
6. Is it right to plan to secure the minister of a certain congregation without mentioning the fact to that congregation?
7. What about the wisdom of former ministers returning to perform weddings and conduct funerals?

8. What are the disadvantages of a short ministry?

9. How may a congregation be trained to favor a long ministry?

10. How and why is the preacher the key man in a congregation's life?

11. Is there some way to avoid the "trial sermon" nuisance?

LESSON V.

THE ELDERSHIP

Scriptural Qualifications

1. Meaning of Terms.

The salutation of Paul and Timothy, at the beginning of the Philippian letter, is "to all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons" (Phil. 1:1). Likewise in Paul's letters to Titus we find that the words "bishop" and "elder" are used interchangeably (Tit. 1:5-7), and in Peter's General Epistle he used "elder" and "shepherd" interchangeably (1 Pet. 5:1-4). Therefore, the words "elder," "bishop" and "shepherd" must have reference to the same office, and, since "overseer" is the translation of "bishop," and "elder" is the translation of "presbyter," and "shepherd" the translation of "pastor," these six terms undoubtedly must designate the same office in the local church. Perhaps in

each case a different function to be performed by the officer is indicated.

2. A Separate Board.

Inasmuch as the work of the elders or presbyters is entirely distinct from the work of the deacons, it no doubt would be well, in the larger churches, for them to have a distinct and separate board. This is indicated in the New Testament in several cases. See Paul's statement to Timothy (1 Tim. 4:14), when he exhorts him not to neglect the gift that was bestowed upon him by the laying on of the hands of the presbytery. The presbytery, here, certainly would not refer to a group that would include deacons or laymen.

Church history clearly shows that, for a number of generations after the establishment of the church, there was a plurality of bishops in each church. Later, without Scriptural warrant, this gradually changed to a plurality of churches under one bishop.

We are aware of the fact that, in present-day usage, the words "bishop," "elder" and "pastor" are not synonymous, but, inasmuch as we are endeavoring to build an organization that will be Scriptural as well as

expedient, we must go back to the New Testament for our direction in the use of terms, as well as in the performance of the work.

3. Qualifications Considered.

We have not been left in the dark concerning the qualifications that should be in the lives of the men who are to be selected to fill this chief office in the local church. They are listed in the New Testament in Tit. 1:6-9 and in 1 Tim. 3:2-7 (R. V.).

It will be noted that in 1 Timothy there are three qualities of character not mentioned in Titus, and in Titus are two not mentioned in 1 Timothy.

If these named qualifications were now required up to 100 per cent., there would be very few churches, if any, that would have even one elder. We take it that these qualifications are the desirable ones, and the ideal is the perfection up to which we are to measure, as nearly as possible. Jesus said: "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect" (Matt. 5:48). In another place the Lord is quoted as saying: "Be ye holy; for I am holy" (1 Pet. 1:16). It is not meant that any human being

can be infinitely perfect or infinitely holy, like God. But God would not be perfect were He to give us anything other than a perfect ideal. We are poor children of His if we do not strive to live up to the best of our possibilities.

We may never reach the ideal which God holds before us, but the fact that the ideal is high, and we have made a desperate effort, causes us to be much better than we would be if it were low and easily reached.

Blameless (Tit. 1:6).—This characteristic is mentioned first. The bishop, or elder, is to be free from blame, without a bad habit. This is fine, and perhaps, if a man could live up to it 100 per cent., there would be little need of admonishing him to have some of the other qualifications that follow.

One Wife (1 Tim. 3:2).—The statement that he is to be “the husband of one wife” has been the cause of much discussion and some dissension. We take it that it means he is to be a monogamist; that is, not a polygamist.

Getting at the real meaning seems to be a matter of correctly translating the original. Weymouth translates the passage, “a man

of blameless life, true to his one wife." Moffat translates it, "above reproach, only once married." Macknight, one of the most scholarly of translators, has it "blameless, the husband of one wife at a time." The view of Conybeare and Howson is that the phrase is directed against certain types of polygamy and loose conceptions of marriage that were then tolerated by Greek and Roman law.

When we become absolute literalists we find ourselves getting into trouble. The Holy Spirit says: "The letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life" (2 Cor. 3:6). It is easy to see that what the Holy Spirit desires here is to guard against polygamy. It is probable that Paul was not married. We find nothing to indicate that he was, and certainly less would not be required of an apostle than of an elder.

Well-governed Children (1 Tim. 3:4).—An elder's children must be well reared, in case he is a man of family. If he can not have a good influence over his own children, it is not likely that his counsel would be respected—especially his counsel to parents.

Not Self-willed (Tit. 1:7).—The elder is not to be contrary or headstrong. He must

be reasonable. He must be a man of open mind and willing to take as well as give.

Self-mastery (Tit. 1:7).—He is to be a man who can control his temper. A man without a temper is scarcely a man, and a man with a temper that he can not control is not a fit man for the eldership. Happy is he who has a temper that he directs, and not a temper that directs him.

No Brawler (1 Tim. 3:3; Tit. 1:7).—He is to be able to get along with his fellow-men, which clearly indicates that he is not to be quarrelsome or contentious, or do anything that would make him a disturber of the peace.

No Striker (1 Tim. 3:3; Tit. 1:7).—Not to be a striker probably has no reference to the strikes of our labor unions, but rather to the stirring up of enmities among people.

No Grafter (Tit. 1:7).—This means he is not to be dishonest. “Not greedy of filthy lucre” (King James). “Grafter” indicates selfishness, hardness of heart and taking undue advantage. Certainly, that kind of man would make a poor bishop in a church. He may make money, but it must be done honestly.

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Given to Hospitality (1 Tim. 3:2).—He is to possess the spirit of cordial good will, setting the good example of entertaining strangers as well as friends. He is to show neighborliness and kindness of heart.

A Lover of Good (Tit. 1:8).—It is here specified that he is to be a lover of good men. There is not much doubt that if a man loves good men, he will do his best to be good himself and to do good.

Sober-minded (Tit. 1:8).—To be sober-minded is to be “level-headed” and not overly excitable or radical in thought or expression. It is to be temperate and considerate rather than rash.

Just.—For him to be just certainly means that he is to be fair. If he makes a trade, he does not misrepresent matters. In his dealings with men there is no attempt to take an unfair advantage.

Holy (Tit. 1:8).—While a great many men probably would not profess holiness, yet they would not like to be considered unholy. Holy does not mean sanctimonious. As to what heights of holiness one might attain is a question, but surely an elder should not be unholy. Without doubt, the freer a man

is from sin the better fitted he is to do the work of an elder.

Self-controlled (Tit. 1:8).—In the Authorized Version, the word “temperance” is used, while in the Revised we have the term “self-control,” which is better. Self-control is not so easy to misconstrue. It means what temperance originally meant before it became distorted by modern usage. Solomon said: “He that ruleth his spirit is greater than he that taketh a city.” Certainly, no one is well able to lead and direct others until he is able to control himself.

Apt to Teach (1 Tim. 3:2).—The fifteenth qualification indicates that he must earnestly contend for the faith—“holding to the faithful word.” This we would not understand to mean that he should be contentious but rather that he should personally be able to teach with earnestness, and willing to advocate to the extent of his abilities, the gospel which is “the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth.”

Not a Novice.—In the Greek this means a neophyte—one “newly planted.” Macknight says it means “not a new convert”; not an inexperienced man. We feel that this has

little to do with his age. There are many men sixty or seventy years of age who are too young to be elders of the church, because they are yet babes in Christ. They need the sincere milk of the Word, not strong meat (Heb. 5:12). Babes in Christ are not strong enough to shoulder the responsibility of the souls of a community. To choose them as elders might endanger the church and work to their disadvantage. They might become discouraged and quit. It often is true that serving for a time as deacons helps to qualify men for the eldership.

Good Reputation, or “good testimony from them that are without” (1 Tim. 3:7).—This last qualification states that he should be a man of good repute. All previous items deal with his character. This one deals with his reputation. We feel sure that if all those other characteristics are possessed to any considerable degree, he must have a good reputation. People can not help knowing that any man is good when he practically complies with these sixteen requirements. There might be some doubt as to whether he is qualified unless he makes this seventeenth. If people lack confidence

in him, there probably is a reason. The church can not afford to jeopardize its own reputation by putting men into the chief office of the church who are not of good repute.

Because of overlapping of terms, we purposely have omitted some qualifications mentioned in the two texts, but these have been included in the ones we have mentioned. If a man could measure up to these seventeen splendid qualities, he would be perfect, and would have no opportunity to grow larger or better. It is indicated by the contention of Paul and Barnabas, also Paul and Peter, that they, though apostles, did not measure up to these qualities 100 per cent. This does not excuse us, however, from doing our best.

Main Duties Contemplated

The chief work of the church is to win souls to Christ and to train them in Christian service. This is a spiritual work. All the material things of the church are but means to this end. The bishops of the local church are the overseers of all things relating to soul redemption; such as, worship,

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teaching, preaching and exhortation. But perhaps their chief activity is to shepherd the flock. This would mean, not only to feed the flock, but also to protect the flock, and, in case one is lost or in danger, they should find him and bring him back in safety to the fold.

Whether or not this work should be done by proxy is a question. Most of the churches to-day have delegated much of this work to the preacher, who, in modern times, is called "the pastor of the church." No doubt the preacher should do some of the pastoral work of the church as well as some of the ministering, which is the work of the deacons. But probably that is true to-day which was true in the days of the apostles when they said: "It is not reason that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables. Wherefore brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business" (Acts 6:2, 3).

Entirely too often the work that ought to be done by the elders must be done by the preacher. He must do it at the expense of his time to study and of his preaching-time.

When dissension takes place among members of the congregation, it is a time for the elders to act. They are permanent members of the church, and should be more vitally interested in it than they could expect their minister to be. The preacher, who, as far as possible, must have and keep the goodwill of all the people of the community, would better keep out of these disturbances. His message should be listened to without prejudice. He should not be asked to mix into these disturbances, lest one or both parties become unreasonably offended and cease listening to the gospel.

Questions on Lesson V.

1. Name the six words in the New Testament that refer to the elders.

2. What are the different phases of the elders' work as indicated by these words?

3. In what way do we now use the word "pastor"?

4. Do the qualifications of elders as given in 1 Timothy and in Titus indicate perfection of life and character?

5. What is meant by the statement that the elder must be the husband of one wife?

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6. Would you say that an elder should be a man with a temper?

7. What does Paul mean by writing to both Timothy and Titus that the elder is to be “no brawler” and “no striker”?

8. In stating that the elder is not to be greedy of filthy lucre, do the Scriptures mean that he is not permitted to acquire this world’s goods?

9. Is it your opinion that the people of our day have declined in hospitality?

10. What is meant by the words sober-minded, just and holy?

11. What would you say about the present-day elders being “apt to teach”?

12. What about the wisdom of selecting new converts as elders?

13. How much of an effort should be made to restore the New Testament ideals in the qualifications of elders?

LESSON VI.

THE ELDERSHIP ORGANIZED

Getting Ready for Work

1. Committees.

We are still considering that group of men which, in the New Testament, is called the presbytery. That the men who have been selected by the church to be the overseers of the church, should be organized into a board of officers, is certainly an expedient procedure. They should select one of their number to be the presiding officer. He is known as the chairman.

Perhaps also there should be a vice-chairman, and, since every church must have a clerk to keep the church roll, the clerk may well be the secretary of the board, avoiding the objection of too many officers.

Functioning in this board should be at least four committeemen. In case the

board is very small, one member may be the chairman of more than one committee, and other committeemen may be added.

2. Devotional Committee.

The work of this committee has to do with worship, prayer and praise. Its members look after the communion, to see that it is characterized by dignity and honor, and that every member possible observes it in the right manner.

They also are responsible for the worship services of the church. They see that the midweek or "Church Night" service is kept up, and help young people all they can in their prayer life. Also, in every way possible, this committee should encourage family worship and individual prayer.

Music, both vocal and instrumental, is used in worship. Whenever and wherever it has a place in the church, it should be devotional. Practically every hymn or song sung in services of the church is either a prayer or a melody of praise. Therefore it very properly falls within the province of this committee to do whatever is necessary to promote the best music conducive to spiritual growth. If it is possible for the com-

mittee to influence the individual lives of the members of the church in the use of more sacred and better music in the homes, it will be a fine service to render.

3. Oversight Committee.

This committee has much to do with the membership. It would be well if the church clerk were considered an *ex-officio* member of the committee, or perhaps in some churches it may be expedient for him to be the chairman. The committee should keep the church roll revised and up to date. This is an important responsibility. In order properly to look after the members of the church, the territory is districted and helpers are selected. Captains are placed over these districts.

Whenever families begin to fall away from the church, the oversight committee reports the fact to the board of elders and everything possible is done to restore them. The committee keeps careful record of removals, deaths, births, marriages, change of location, the incoming of new families, conversions and prospective members, working with the minister in keeping such data alive and up to date. All of this work will

necessitate organization among these district workers, headed up, of course, by the pastoral committeeman. Cards and blanks are easily obtained to facilitate the prosecution of their work. The results in the upbuilding of the congregation are going to be in proportion to the bigness of the work.

4. Evangelistic Committee.

When we think of evangelism, we think of two things—preaching and soul-winning. Therefore, this falls to the oversight of the pulpit-supply committee. If the minister is ill, or absent from his pulpit for any reason; if he has resigned and his pulpit is vacant—it falls to the duty of this committee to see to it that the pulpit is filled. Also, in the selection of a new minister, this committee may be asked to take the lead and be ready to do such visiting or corresponding as may be necessary.

Most churches have revival meetings every year or two. Such meetings are promoted by this committee. The committee members should think the thing through and be ready to make suggestions with regard to the time and the type of man to hold the meeting. Usually the minister

rightly has much to say about this. When the meeting is scheduled, the committee may be the chief aid in its promotion. Subcommittees may be appointed, such as for publicity and entertainment. Quite often the evangelist has his own schemes of organizing his help. Proper records are kept of all additions.

Personal evangelism is coming to be an established method of work among our churches. This is promoted by the committee. Of course, at all special periods of decision, such as decision days, Easter and other times when all are making special effort along this line, the committee is busy. In fact, the work of evangelism should be kept going all the time. The committee may profitably encourage the formation of classes for the study of the best ways of doing personal evangelistic work. A list of good personal workers should be kept, and the committee will use its initiative in kindling the evangelistic spirit. All should be interested in bringing people to Christ.

5. Educational Committee.

The last committee that I wish to name is the educational committee. When pos-

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sible, one or more elders should head up this work, just as we have indicated should be done with the other committees. The educational committee should see to it that some one is named to be a general director of religious education for the entire church, if the church possibly can afford such director. He, by all means, should be true to the Scriptures.

The director may be employed as an associate to the minister, and give all of his time to the educational life of the church. In case the church is not financially able to add this extra expense, it may appoint the preacher, who is first of all a teacher, to head up all the teaching forces of the congregation. In case the church has no minister, or if the preacher is not fitted for such work, the most competent man or woman in the congregation may be appointed to direct the educational activities.

We think, first of all, of the Sunday school, Bible school or church school, whichever name you prefer. Many churches now conduct Daily Vacation Bible schools in the summer time and the "Church Night" or midweek service may be educational. An

increasing number of churches are now co-operating in the week-day school of Christian education. There are mission-study classes and missionary groups and organizations, all of which are educational and some of which most any church can use. All this work should come under the direction of the educational committee. Your publishing house will help you select materials.

Board Meeting

1. Order and System.

The board of elders should have a stated time and place for a regular meeting, at least once a month. There sometimes may be other members of the church present to report on certain matters, or for counsel. The meeting should be orderly, and should proceed in an orderly manner. The secretary should keep an order of business like the one on page 89, or some adaptation of it. The order of business decided upon should be followed faithfully. We suggest that it will be well for every board carefully to study the rules of order found in the back of this book. Suggested order of business:

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1. Call to order; prayer.
2. Roll-call.
3. Approval of minutes.
4. Report of minister.
5. Reports of committees—Devotional, pastoral, evangelistic and special.
6. Unfinished business.
7. New business and discussion of spiritual welfare of the church.
8. Adjournment with prayer.

If each of these standing committees has done the work that it is supposed to do, and has made its report in writing, the field has been covered. The reports of the committees, if accepted on vote of the board, should be filed carefully for future use. As far as possible, parliamentary rules of order should be observed. Careful minutes should be made of the doings of each meeting.

2. Keeping the Minutes.

These minutes may first be written on ordinary paper, and, after correction and adoption, should be accurately written into a book for permanent preservation. Congregations should be exceedingly careful about making and preserving records of all that they do, thus handing down a consecu-

tive history of all the activities of their church life.

Often church boards keep minutes, copy them more or less carefully into a book, and then lose the book. Others have been known to write the minutes, to approve them and then throw them into the waste-basket. It is a pity that there are churches that can not see the importance of a good system of records.

3. Keeping the Roll.

In too many churches the roll seems of little value. Names are not correct, addresses are wrong. Names of those who have united with other churches are still retained. These statements are not guesses; they are the result of actual observations.

Every church should have a card index church roll in addition to a permanent record-book. The pastoral committee should see to it that an adequate, honest, up-to-date and correct roll of the membership is kept.

Questions on Lesson VI.

1. What is the simplest and most expedient organization of the board of elders?

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2. Name four committees that are exceedingly important.

3. Describe the duties of the devotional committee.

4. Describe the duties of the oversight committee.

5. What are the duties of the evangelistic committee?

6. What are the duties of the educational committee?

7. If your church is large enough to have a separate board of elders, when should that board meet?

8. What is the importance of keeping the records of the church in orderly and permanent form?

9. What is an adequate equipment for keeping the records of a church?

10. Why is it important to preserve the minutes?

11. Why is it important to keep a correct roll of the members?

LESSON VII.

THE BOARD OF DEACONS

Character Requirements

1. Work Indicated.

The salutation of Paul and Timothy to the Philippians was to all the saints “with the bishops and deacons.” The word “deacon” means “servant.” Undoubtedly to this class of officers in the early church were committed the material affairs of the church. In this way the work was well divided. The bishops or elders assumed the spiritual, and the deacons and deaconesses the material responsibilities. It is probable that these two distinct classes of officers usually can function better in separate groups; however, there are times when their work requires mutual counsel. In this way, each church would have a board of elders, and a board of deacons and deaconesses.

Scriptural Qualifications

In Paul's first letter to Timothy, in the third chapter, verses 8-12, he states clearly some of the desirable qualifications for men and women who are to serve as deacons and deaconesses in the congregation. For deacons, the qualifications are as follows:

Grave (1 Tim. 3:8).—This does not necessarily mean longfacedness or glumness, and it most certainly does not mean sourness or bitterness, but rather a state of a serious-thinking man, who will not slight or make light of sacred things.

Truthful (1 Tim. 3:8).—That is, he is not double-tongued; his word should be as good as his bond. No one ever ought to be permitted to have a right to doubt his statements.

Temperate (1 Tim. 3:8).—This has to do mostly with the drinking of liquor, but we take it that it would be wise for him to be temperate in all things, as is enjoined by the Scriptures.

Not Grafters (1 Tim. 3:8).—The Scriptures clearly state that he must not be greedy of ill-gotten gains. It is the love of money

that is the root of all evil, and if he loves money so well that he will get it dishonestly he would not be fitted for an office in the church in which he must deal with finances contributed by others. His name and presence would put the church in bad repute.

Faithful (1 Tim. 3:9).—He must hold the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience. Life is a mystery, and it is surrounded by mysteries. But with regard to the faith in these mysterious things, it must be sincere. Blessed is the man with convictions, but more blessed is that man who has the courage to act according to his convictions.

Experienced (1 Tim. 3:10).—A babe in Christ is not fitted for the serious responsibility of a deacon any more than an actual infant is fitted for the responsibilities of an engineer. Only after he has been fed on the sincere milk of the Word, and has become strong enough to endure strong meat, should he be selected to fill this responsible office.

Blameless (1 Tim. 3:10).—Here we find that the deacon as well as the elder must have a good reputation, not only from those within the church, but of those without.

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Monogamists (1 Tim. 3:12).—If polygamy is to be banished from the church, not only bishops, but deacons, should be forbidden its practice.

Governing Well Their Homes (1 Tim. 3:12).—Here, like the elders, the deacons must rule their children and their own houses well. It isn't supposed that the children of deacons or elders are to be perfect, but they should be under that kind of control that will result in self-control.

Deaconesses

It seems clear from the Scriptures that there must have been at least some of the churches with female servants or deacons. Paul, in writing to the Roman church, refers to Phebe, a servant (deaconess) of the church of Cenchrea (Rom. 16:1). Most of the evidence for deaconesses in the early church comes from sources outside the New Testament. In 1 Tim. 3:8-10 are the qualifications of deacons. Those of the deaconesses could not have been greatly different. Some early Christian writers indicate that deaconesses taught children and ministered to the poor and unfortunate of their own sex.

Board of Deacons

The board of deacons has for its membership all the deacons (and deaconesses, if there are any) that have been selected by the church. The preacher is an advisory member. There should be a stated time and place for the meeting of this board at least once each month. It has been found practical by some churches to have the board of elders meet on Monday evening and the board of deacons on Tuesday evening of the same week, so that the preacher may be in each meeting.

When the hour has arrived for the opening of this board meeting, the chairman, or some one else who has the authority, will call the meeting to order, and, after prayer, they should proceed to follow an order of business somewhat as follows:

1. Call to order; prayer.
2. Roll-call.
3. Approval of minutes.
4. Reports of financial secretary, treasurer, auditor and trustees.
5. Reports of such committees as are under the direction of the Board of Dea-

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cons. These may be Service Committee, Finance, Reception, Missionary, Benevolence, etc.

6. Unfinished business.

7. New business.

8. Adjournment with prayer.

This board shall elect its own officers, such as chairman, vice-chairman, secretary and treasurer, and appoint certain standing committees.

The duties of the chairman of the Board of Deacons would be those usually devolving upon the presiding officer of any group. The *vice-chairman* to supply in his absence.

Other Officers

The Financial Secretary.—It is expedient to have named officers who are not always elders or deacons. The financial secretary may also be the secretary of the board, keeping the minutes. This in most cases would not be a burden, and would simplify the organization.

The Treasurer.—This officer will receive money from the financial secretary, and pay out only such sums as shall be ordered by

the board, as shall be indicated by warrant drawn by the financial secretary.

The Trustees.—A congregation may and should elect trustees, whether the congregation be incorporated or not. However, it should be remembered that trustees are purely legal officers, and are not New Testament church officers in the sense that elders and deacons are.

In order that property may be legally held, transferred, mortgaged, etc., the law in practically every State provides for the election of trustees, usually three in number. In many States the law provides that signed notice be published at least three times within two weeks prior to the election, that the notice be in a newspaper of general circulation, and that the notice mention the exact time, place and purpose of the meeting. A congregation should familiarize itself with and follow the law of the State in which it is located.

The trustees can not and should not attempt to dictate the policies and work of the church. They hold title to the property, sign deeds, notes and legal papers when so voted and authorized by the church and its

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board of elders and deacons. Though a man should and must be a member of the congregation in order to serve as elder or deacon, one need not necessarily be a member of the church at all in order to hold the office of trustee.

It is an advisable procedure, however, for a church to choose its trustees from the men who have been elected as deacons or elders. Thus the same men who are trustees are also members of the church board and sit in its meetings. The men who have been elected as trustees may be appointed by the board as a property committee, with instructions to look after all matters pertaining to the care of the property, including insurance, janitor service and repairs.

Incorporating.—A congregation may or may not be incorporated. There are conditions, however, under which it is advisable to incorporate and others under which it is practically necessary to do so. In order for any organization to sue or be sued, it is necessary that it be incorporated. In order that it may be a safe body to which to lend money, it must be a body that could be sued for collection if necessary. Therefore, many

banks and loan societies, including our own Church Extension Board, will not lend money to a congregation unless it be incorporated. Furthermore, the fact of a congregation being incorporated makes its tenure of and transfer of title to real estate all the more secure. Each State provides an act or acts under which a church may incorporate. In incorporating, a congregation should have a competent attorney to draw the papers according to the law of the State and guide the matter of filing them with the State authorities.

Reception Committee.—That there should be a reception committee is very evident, for the convenience of seating people in the services of the church, and for the promotion of sociability and courtesy. There is great value in the fact that folks are met at the door by some representative member of the church. A pleasant greeting goes a long way. Never let people come in and stand looking for a seat. More people would attend church if they were met with cordiality when they do attend.

This Reception Committee should function at the morning and evening church

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services, as well at all other meetings of the church. It ought to be ever alert, receiving people and making them happy in their surroundings and fellowship.

Service Committee.—There should be in every church some one or some committee to look after the details of all services. It is better to have a stated committee which would have this specific duty, because what is everybody's business is nobody's business. This committee would see that the communion emblems are prepared and ready when needed, that the baptistery is filled, that the officers are organized and in their places, that necessary substitutes are found, and that nothing is overlooked. Every church service should move in orderly and reverent fashion.

Missionary Committee.—It is the purpose of the Missionary Committee to promote campaigns for the collection of missionary funds, to promote missionary giving, to encourage the study of missions, and the needs of the various fields. Selecting the particular agency through which missionary moneys are to be expended is a matter of the giver's own choice.

Benevolence Committee.—One of the truly religious things that any church can do, and must do, is “to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction” (Jas. 1:27). In every community there are the unfortunate who are orphans and others who are helpless, widowed mothers. Also there are those who are poor because of unfortunate circumstances, ill health, lack of work and other things that bring misery and suffering.

This committee should investigate all cases reported, and, if worthy, they should be given relief. We take it that every child is worthy, though some adults may not be. But the church can not afford to permit little children constantly to go to bed hungry, to shiver in the cold and to die by inches, because they lack the necessary things of life. Perhaps the church can not do more for itself in any way than by caring for the destitute. This committee must be wise and not permit the church to be the victim of grafters.

The benevolence committee is a relief committee. It visits and looks after the sick. In cases of death this committee finds opportunity for service in comforting the be-

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reaved, in helping to make arrangements for the funeral, and in every way becoming a brother or a sister to those in sorrow.

Finance Committee.—In another lesson we shall discuss at considerable length the work of the finance committee. The chairman of this committee is the auditor of all records pertaining to the finances of the church. At each board meeting he should make a report, in writing, of his findings in auditing these records. Also he will recommend bills that are to be paid and submit other plans for financing the work of the church.

Special Committees.—From time to time there will be need of special committees for special functions. These committees should report to the board in writing, and if the work is satisfactory the report should be accepted and filed and the committee discharged. If the work is incomplete, the report should be accepted and filed and the committee continued. Of course, if the report is unsatisfactory, it is rejected.

Unfinished Business.—In the order of business, there will be the item of unfinished business. Here anything that has been begun,

either in this meeting or any previous meeting, may be taken up and discussed further and either completed or laid over.

New Business.—The next and last item is new business. This may be anything and everything that anybody and everybody wishes to bring before the board.

Adjournment.—When all business is finished, a motion to adjourn is in order. After it has been carried, the meeting should be dismissed by prayer.

In this board meeting, as in all other business meetings of the church, parliamentary usage should be observed. (See pp. 161-185.)

In order to make written reports more convenient, and in order to make it more probable that they will be handed in, blanks should be furnished, suitable to the needs of each officer or committeeman, specifying definite things to be reported on. This will serve as a guide, it will expedite matters and will encourage the committeeman.

Questions on Lesson VII.

1. What does the word "deacon" mean, and what was assigned to deacons in the early church?

The Board of Deacons

2. What was the difference between the work of the elders and the work of the deacons?

3. Name some of the Scriptural qualifications of deacons?

4. Is there any particular difference between the deacons' qualifications and those of elders ?

5. Is it possible to find in the average church men who have these ideal traits of character?

6. If such men are not easily found, what should a congregation do?

7. What are we to understand by the Scripture phrase, "husband of one wife"?

8. Does the New Testament statement mean that the deacon must be married, and, if not, what does it mean?

9. What is the New Testament teaching about deaconesses?

10. Why is it well for the deacons to form a board of their own, if the general board is large enough?

11. Name the order observed in the usual order of business.

12. Why have a financial secretary, and what should be his work?

13. What is the function of the church treasurer?

14. Why have trustees, and how should they be chosen?

15. Is it necessary for a church to be incorporated, and what is the law in the matter?

16. Name some necessary committees, and describe their duties.

LESSON VIII.

THE JOINT BOARD

Its Members and Their Election

1. Two Groups of Officers.

It is stated in 2 Cor. 6:1 that we are “workers together with him.” In every well-organized church, there must of necessity be the two classes of officers named in the New Testament, and already mentioned in these lessons—elders and deacons. Usually it will be best for these officers to be formed into separate boards and function separately, because of their different duties. However, in some of the smaller churches, where there are but two or three elders and correspondingly few deacons, it is more practicable for them to work together in one board, endeavoring, however, to keep the work separate and distinct. In the larger and more thoroughly organized churches, it is often found advisable for the board of elders to

have its own meeting and for the board of deacons to do the same.

2. Purpose of Joint Board.

When these two boards come together, they form a *joint board*. There are many things in which both are vitally interested, such as the calling of a minister, the selecting of an evangelist, the erection of a house of worship and other matters. It would be well for this joint board to meet regularly once a quarter. Of course, in the smaller churches, where the joint board is the only board, it should meet once a month. Special meetings in case of necessity should be called to consider special matters.

3. Order of Business.

In the quarterly joint meeting, there should be reports from both boards, that each may know what the other is doing, and that all may be conversant with the whole life and work of the church. This board meeting should be as orderly as that of either the elders or deacons. A simple order of business is sufficient, something like the following:

1. Call to order and prayer.
2. Approval of minutes.

The Joint Board

3. Report of elders.
4. Report of deacons.
5. Unfinished business.
6. New business.
7. Adjournment with prayer.

As nearly as possible, each item of work should be done by the particular board under which it logically falls. At the regular, stated intervals, however, the joint board should meet, even though there be nothing that makes it necessary. The spiritual interests of the church and the possibility of winning certain ones to Christ are always fruitful subjects for consideration.

4. Officers of Joint Board.

There need not be any especially elected officers of this joint board. The Scriptures provide that the elders are to be the spiritual overseers of the church, and therefore it may be understood that the chairman of the elders will be chairman of the joint board, and that the chairman of the deacons will be his assistant, in cases where the board is large.

Of course, when the joint board is the only board, it will become necessary to select officers for the one board. In such case the

board will not only select presiding and recording officers, but also a treasurer and various committees. They will see to it that the committees are headed up in such a way that elders will supervise the spiritual welfare of the church and deacons will supervise its material affairs.

Election of Elders and Deacons

1. Various Practices.

In the past, there have been many and varied practices with regard to the manner of selecting officers for the church. In some cases they have been appointed by an evangelist even without the consent of the congregation. In other cases nominations have been made and discussed by the congregation, and then voted upon until some one is declared elected. In other instances an evangelist, or the chairman of the existing board or some other designated person, has appointed a nominating committee to bring in "a slate," which is submitted to the board and then to the congregation, and either accepted or rejected—usually accepted. Still another method is for the board itself to

nominate the members needed, and sometimes even elect without the consent of the congregation. These and other methods in various forms have been used with varying degrees of success.

That it is Scriptural for an evangelist to appoint or ordain officers is beyond dispute, if the congregation is not prepared to attend to the matter without help. Paul authorized Titus to ordain (appoint) elders in every city where there was a congregation (Tit. 1:5). We also remember that when the seven were chosen, whom we call the deacons of the early church, the *church* was told by the apostles to select "seven men of honest report . . . whom we may appoint [ordain] over this business" (Acts 6:3). This leaves little doubt that the congregation is empowered to select and ordain its own officers.

2. Duration of Eldership.

In this connection a problem has arisen in the experience of some of the churches—a problem that has caused trouble. There was a time when many elders who, when ordained, understood that they were elders for life. It mattered not what congregation they might be in, they still considered them-

selves elders. Moving nor time had any effect upon their tenure of office. In some cases this has worked fairly well. In others it has not. There is no Scripture commanding the permanent incumbency of an elder in the office to which he has been ordained, and experience has revealed instances where such permanency was neither wise nor expedient.

A man not fitted for the eldership blocks the progress of the church. If he insists that because he was made an elder he is permanently an elder, there is no way to eliminate him without bad feeling. Every man has friends, and often, by the time it is all over, the church is divided.

There is nothing said in the Scriptures about any church officer being appointed for a definite length of time, and here is where expediency comes into play. Even though it were lawful for one to be an elder for life, it usually is not expedient. We would say that an elder who is not willing to be ordained for a specified term of one, two or three years, probably is the very one who should not be appointed for life. A man becomes an elder only by virtue of having been

made an elder by the congregation. The same congregation that conferred the trust can set the time limit or terminate the trust, if it becomes necessary.

The Deacons.

It probably is true that a deacon, if he is the wrong man for the place, is not in position to make as much trouble as is the wrong man who is an elder, but neither should hold office permanently.

3. Proceeding with the Election.

Many churches have found that a three-year tenure of office is about right. To start this plan, select one-third of the elders and one-third of the deacons for three years, one-third for two years and one-third for one year. The terms of one-third of the board will expire each year, and the congregation is never without a board. As the time of any man expires he may be re-elected, or somebody may be put in his place, just as the church sees fit.

Inasmuch as the New Testament does not describe the manner of selecting those who are to be made elders and deacons, we think it best to offer at least two plans that have been found satisfactory. No two congrega-

tions are exactly alike in condition and *personnel*, hence it is necessary to have some flexibility of plan and procedure.

As a method of approach it is well to have a Selecting Committee of three or more appointed by the board a sufficient length of time ahead of the day of the election. The committee preferably is composed of elders, but if this is not practicable it may be made up according to the best wisdom of the board.

4. Plan One.

The Selecting Committee keeps in mind the Scriptural qualifications of elders and deacons, and makes a careful list of all members of the congregation that most nearly meet these requirements. The committee keeps its own counsel, but seeks to know the will of the congregation, any member of which is at liberty to make suggestions.

From the total list the committee, according to its best judgment, makes choice of the required number for elders and required number for deacons, and recommends these to the board. The board carefully reviews the whole matter, makes changes if changes seem advisable, and decides upon the names to recommend to the church.

The Joint Board

At a regular service on the first Sunday in December, or preferably at the annual meeting of the congregation, usually held sometime in that month, the board, through its chairman presents its recommended list of names. If ample opportunity has been given for the congregation to make its preferences known, this report of the board usually will be adopted. But if at this meeting a motion should be made and seconded that another name be substituted for a name on the recommended list, the question will have to be decided by ballot.

5. Plan Two.

Some congregations believe that all matters of importance should be submitted to the church, that all the members may have opportunity to express their will. This is done by ballot.

The Selecting Committee and Board decide upon names as in Plan 1, and place these names on a blackboard before the congregation. All members of the congregation have been notified of the time and place of election, and have been asked to think the matter over carefully and to have in mind the persons they deem best qualified.

The chairman asks the congregation for the suggestion of additional names, which are offered one at a time, with a statement of the special fitness of the persons named. These are added to the names already on the blackboard.

The ballots are distributed and the people are asked to write the names of their choice for the office of elder. While these are being counted, the people will write the names of their choice for the office of deacon. In both instances, those whose names receive the highest number—or a majority—of votes are declared elected. If the first ballot does not elect a sufficient number, drop the name receiving the smallest vote and take another ballot.

It has been found convenient, when there are terms of various lengths, to have it understood that the one with the greatest majority shall fill the office for the longest term, and the one with the least majority will fill the office for the shortest term, and so on. This seems fair, and eliminates misunderstanding and confusion.

Churches using the ballot method can simplify matters by having the ballots

The Joint Board

printed. At the top of one are the words "For Elder." At the top of another, "For Deacon." Beneath each heading are printed the words, "Vote for five," or whatever may be the right number. The ballot is ruled. Down the left side are printed a number of hollow squares in which the voter makes his check-marks.

6. Installation.

After the officers have been duly elected by the congregation, they should be properly installed into office in some impressive and dignified way. Some churches regularly ordain by fasting, laying on of hands and prayers. Others have the newly elected officers stand in the presence of the congregation, while the minister, or some other leading member of the church invokes God's blessing upon them in the discharge of their work.

Questions on Lesson VIII.

1. Under what conditions is it best to organize elders and deacons into separate boards?

2. What should be the purpose of the joint board?

3. Describe the order of business of this joint board.

4. What subject is always a fruitful one for consideration in the meetings of both the single boards and the joint board?

5. Why is it unnecessary for the joint board to have its own especially elected officers?

6. When there is but one board of officers in a congregation, how should that board divide its work?

7. Name various ways in which churches may elect their boards of officers.

8. What circumstances would make it both fitting and Scriptural for an evangelist to appoint the members of a church board?

9. Does the New Testament indicate that the congregation has a right to select its own officers?

10. Is there any Scripture making the office of elder a permanent one?

11. Why would it sometimes be a mistake to make a man an elder for life?

12. Do the Scriptures say anything about the length of time in which elders and deacons should serve?

13. Describe the three-year rotation plan.

The Joint Board

14. What are the arguments for and against the congregation's appointment of a selecting committee?

15. Describe and discuss Plan No. 1 for the election of officers.

16. Describe and discuss Plan No. 2.

17. Why is it a good idea to have an installation service after the officers have been selected?

LESSON IX.

FINANCING THE KINGDOM

How, When and Why

The most baffling practical problem involved in carrying out Christ's great commission is the problem of finance, but it is the Lord's business and in it we are to be "not slothful" (Rom. 12:11). The New Testament seems to recognize this fact because there are a number of vigorous words used to cover the financial situation. Five of these are particularly strong: stewardship, fellowship, tithing, almsgiving and liberality.

1. Stewardship.

In the New Testament a steward is the custodian of property, and our Lord used the word to indicate that His followers are custodians and must employ their means to promote the welfare of His kingdom. The Scriptures teach that the earth and its full-

ness are the Lord's. We are His stewards. This is taught in Luke 16:1-8 and 19:11-28.

2. The Tithe.

From early Old Testament times, down through the Mosaic *regime*, the Jews were required to give a tenth of their income to the support of the law of Jehovah, and were to give offerings besides. They were very punctilious in observing this command, and there seems to be considerable evidence that leaders in the early churches of Christ urged upon the members a system of tithing. It is our opinion that, if we give in proportion to our means, some will give a tenth, some more than a tenth, some less than a tenth, and possibly a few nothing at all, but these last should be helped by the others (Gen. 28:22; Neh. 10:37, 38).

3. Fellowship.

This word, as used in 2 Cor. 8:4 and in Acts 2:42, signifies the sharing of our means for the benefit of needy saints. In the New Testament the various uses of the word translated "fellowship" signify a cordial co-operation with the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit in every good work. It means communion in the assembly of the saints.

It means benevolence and co-operation in the maintenance of the ministry (Ps. 1:1, 2).

Almsgiving.—The giving of alms was required by the law in the Old Testament, and the teaching of the New Testament assumes such giving to be a part of the Christian's life (Matt. 6:1-4; Luke 14:3; Acts 20:35; Acts 11:29).

4. Liberality.

That those who serve the Lord are to be liberal in giving to the Lord's work is the teaching of both the Old and the New Testaments. The ninth chapter of 2 Corinthians uses the word "bounty" in connection with their giving, and calls it a ministration of service. All giving is to be done "not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver."

On the threshold of the discussion of ways and means in financing the cause of Jesus Christ, one thing emphatically should be said. *Methods of "church finance" will continue to be a shifting array of erratic experiments, expedients and devices until the day when all Christian parents instill the principles of Christian giving into the minds and hearts of their children.*

Contributing to the promotion of Christ's kingdom should be taught as a privilege rather than a duty, an opportunity rather than an obligation, an investment rather than a donation, a necessity rather than an option.

Our Debt to Christianity

All that is finest and best in our civilization comes from the teachings of Jesus Christ. If the influence and perpetuity of those teachings were to disappear, we would be plunged into chaos. Most children and young people do not know this, hence they grow to manhood and womanhood without realizing that their chief dependence in this world is upon God, and that their only real freedom is secured through obedience to the teachings of Christ's gospel. Somebody is responsible for this lack of knowledge. The giving of self to Christ should be a part of every child's instruction, and self can be given only in service, worship and substance.

1. The Exceptional Church.

It is indeed an exceptional church where 80 per cent. of the names on the membership roll are also on the roll of financial contrib-

utors. But why should it be exceptional? This proportion, and even greater, can be reached by any congregation that is sufficiently in earnest to appoint a wide-awake, businesslike finance committee.

It is a grave mistake for a church to be indifferent in the matter of its own support.

It is a mistake for the members of a church to tolerate slipshod habits in handling church finances.

It is a mistake for Christian men, women and young people to deprive themselves of the privilege of investing in the welfare and world-wide mission of Christ's kingdom.

It is a mistake for Christian people to forget that God will hold them accountable for the manner in which they attend to their stewardship.

2. The Right Motive.

To say that "the church needs money" is to utter a mere truism. Of course the church needs money, and so does every worth-while cause in the world.

The really big question in every one's life is the one that the Psalmist put to himself: "What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits toward me?" And the

real motive behind the question is the planting and spreading of God's truth that the world may be saved from sin.

Business in Church Finance

So far as the business part of church life is concerned, it should be managed with system, promptness and accuracy, the same as any other business.

1. The Budget.

Before any new year begins, the finance committee, at the direction of the board, should make a budget of the necessary and probable expense of running the church for the year.

This budget might or might not include the Sunday school and other organizations, but more than likely these would budget their own expenses.

The budget is made up by listing all the proposed items of expense for the year, with the amount placed after each item—such as minister's salary, local benevolences, missions, janitor, fuel, repairs, etc. The items will vary according to the needs of each congregation.

2. Raising the Money.

There is no one plan that can be used with equal success in all churches. Every church, however, should make out an annual budget and every church should have a capable finance committee.

3. The Every-member Canvass Plan.

Many churches use this method with success.

Some time before the end of the year the board of officers selects a canvassing committee large enough to visit the entire church membership in one Sunday afternoon.

The finance committee divides the membership into territories or sections of such size that two canvassers, going together, can canvass any one of the sections in an afternoon, without missing anybody.

The preacher may, in advance, preach two or three sermons on phases of the question of liberal giving.

It has been found a happy arrangement to have a special evening meal for the entire committee of canvassers a few evenings before the canvass. The purpose is to encourage the committee and talk over ways to make the enterprise a great success.

The Every-member Canvass Plan is a good plan, and has the advantage of the enthusiasm of a concerted drive. Likewise there are some disadvantages. One of these is that in employing enough canvassers to reach the whole membership of a large congregation in an afternoon, many solicitors are used who are far from expert, and hence not too tactful in securing pledges.

4. The Finance Committee Plan.

This plan is one that does not attempt to do everything in one day. It works at the task systematically every week and every month in the year.

First of all, a permanent committee of three (or more if deemed necessary) is chosen, taking care that they are the most expert, persistent and tactful. Pledges taken are expected to run, not for one year, but thereafter until request is made by the pledger for discontinuance or change.

As new members come into the congregation they are immediately presented with a letter of greeting and explanation of the financial plans of the church, and are given a card on which all departments of the work are listed. Each new member is asked to

check the work in which he will be willing to help, and also to designate the amount per week which he will give toward the budget or budgets. If there are separate budgets for current expenses, missions and building fund, a place should be left for each. New members expect to have their part and do their part. They will take it more kindly if pledged within the week after uniting. A packet of envelopes then should be presented, and a New Testament may well be given.

This committee not only checks receipts each week, sends statements each month and gets in touch with new members when there are such, but does actual work right along to keep the income up to budget requirements. Sometimes an individual pledge should be increased. The committee seeks to adjust the matter. This plan is a good one if in charge of an active, conscientious committee that takes a real pride in its work. It has the advantage of using fewer and more experienced workers to carry it out.

5. The Employed Financial Secretary Plan.

Churches with large memberships are finding it advantageous to employ a financial

secretary to do most of the work described as that of the finance committee. Such a secretary may often serve as church bookkeeper, financial secretary, manager of the building, director of congregational enterprises and minister's assistant. His financial work, however, is described above.

What About Church Suppers?—A very considerable amount of money is raised by churches through suppers, dinners, bazaars, quilts, concerts, lectures, and other types of service or entertainment.

About the best that may be said of this practice is, first, that it gets the money, and, second, that it provides opportunity for social enjoyment and better acquaintance. The fact that this method of raising money sometimes descends to grab-bags and lottery schemes, indicates that there was not much to be said for it in the first place.

Have You Tried Giving a Tenth?—Though we seemingly dismissed this plan in an earlier paragraph, the fact remains that those churches and individuals that practice tithing pronounce it the very best and most satisfactory way to raise money for the support of Christ's kingdom.

Men have said again and again that they never prospered financially until after they began giving one-tenth of their income to the Lord's work.

Duplex Envelopes.—Your publisher can furnish you with duplex envelopes—fifty-two envelopes in a packet—as many packets as there are regular givers. One side of the envelope is for the regular church subscription and the other for missions and benevolences.

By encouragement the members will be led to contribute in this way with regularity.

Questions on Lesson IX.

1. What is the most baffling practical problem involved in the church's work of carrying on?

2. Name five particularly strong New Testament words used in connection with church finance.

3. What is the New Testament meaning of the word "stewardship"?

4. Was tithing imposed only upon the Jews, or is it a necessary system among Christians?

5. How is the New Testament principle of fellowship to be understood and practiced?

6. Is the giving of alms urged by the New Testament, and what is meant by the term "liberality"?

7. Why is it particularly necessary for Christian parents to see to it that their children are established in the habit of Christian giving?

8. What is our debt to the religion of the Lord Jesus Christ?

9. How may we pay the debt?

10. Should the churches go begging while places of amusement overflow with money?

11. Why is it necessary for the church to be businesslike in its financial affairs?

12. Why should the church have a financial budget?

13. Explain the every-member canvass plan of raising money.

14. Explain the financial committee plan.

15. What is to be said for the employed financial secretary plan?

16. What have you to say about the wisdom of church suppers?

17. What is the argument of those who advocate the practice of tithing?

LESSON X.

ESTABLISHING A PROGRAM

The Plan in Brief

1. Preliminary Preparation.

Once when Israel hesitated in her exodus, the Lord said to Moses: "Speak unto the children of Israel, that they go forward" (Ex. 14:15). We well may take the same advice. To raise a given church from a state of inadequate organization and administration to one that is orderly and effective, will usually necessitate a number of changes. In making them there must be wisdom and caution, else harm may result instead of good.

The first thing necessary would be to familiarize the officary with the new order of things desired. This may be done best by classes in a course such as the one presented in this book. Supplemental books and articles written especially for the work of the officers of the church may be read. There should be sermons preached in which are

clearly stated the need of and the reasons for certain qualifications of officers. These should be explained and stressed, and a survey of the present conditions of the church carefully made.

2. Shifting Gears.

There are two ways in which the proposed changes may be made. One is to shift from low immediately into high. The other is to shift from low into intermediate and then into high. The desire of the congregation, and the willingness of its members to respond to new plans and methods, must be the guide in choosing between these two methods. In either case, the ultimate aim will be to bring about a dignified and efficient organization of the forces of the church in the administration of its affairs—Scriptural as far as revealed, wisely expedient the rest of the way.

For most churches, it probably would be well to proceed one step at a time, making the most necessary changes first, leaving the others to be made at such time as seems best.

Possibly the best way to reach the desired goal is to adopt some definite points in pro-

cedure. These should be carefully worked out by the officers, but should never be looked upon as arbitrary—merely suggestive. Conference with other congregations that have followed a similar course would help.

3. Going Ahead.

If several weeks have been spent in preparing the people for the change from an inefficient to an orderly plan, the following digest, or something similar, may be placed in the hands of the congregation. After the points have been thoroughly studied, they may be acted upon by the church. It would not be amiss for a sermon or two to be preached on items of particular interest, especially those that indicate radical changes. It is not probable that the same list of points would suit all local churches equally well. In a general way, however, the really important items will suit any church. Differences would be in details, not in essentials. Minor changes may be made as local conditions demand.

Suggested Points of Procedure for Local Churches of Christ

1. The new Testament shall be our rule as to faith, doctrine and life.

2. In all things pertaining to system and order, the New Testament shall guide us when its teachings are clearly apparent. In other matters we are left to do that which is most expedient.

3. The congregation's membership is composed of those who have complied with the New Testament conditions of admission, and who desire to co-operate in the Lord's work.

4. The officers consist of two classes provided by the New Testament; namely, elders and deacons. If thought best, the latter may be of both sexes.

5. There should be at least three elders and six deacons in any church. In a church of five or six hundred members, six or eight elders and fifteen to twenty deacons would be advisable. In an unusually large membership, there might be twelve or more elders and forty or more deacons. The exact number and exact proportion of elders and deacons can not be stated arbitrarily.

6. According to Scripture, the elders are the spiritual overseers, and are to consider it their duty and privilege to have charge of spiritual, educational, devotional and evangelistic matters.

7. The deacons and deaconesses may be selected and elected in the same manner as the elders—one-third each year. The number of deaconesses may be governed by the need of special ministration by women.

8. The deacons, aided by deaconesses in such way as they may elect, shall have charge of the material matters of the church, such as finances, local benevolences, repairs, improvements and care of property.

9. If thought best, and the church is large enough, the officers may be organized into two groups—the elders' group and the deacons' group. Each group elects its own chairman and secretary.

It is suggested that the secretary of the elders' board be the church clerk, and the secretary of the board of deacons the financial secretary.

The board of deacons may elect the church treasurer. Other officers may be chosen and elected as necessary, and such committees as are needed will be appointed.

10. From the board of deacons at least three representative men should be selected and elected by the church as trustees, and shall be the property committee.

Establishing a Program

11. There should be regular monthly meetings of each of the boards, that all business may be attended to in an orderly fashion and proper records made and kept. A joint board meeting may be called by either of these boards any time a general board meeting is necessary. The regular meeting of the joint boards shall be once a quarter.

12. The chairman of the board of elders should be the chairman of the joint board. The chairman of the board of deacons may be the vice-chairman of the joint board, and the church clerk may be the secretary, with the financial secretary as his assistant.

13. All ordinary matters of business and management shall be taken care of by these boards, but matters of greater importance, such as calling a preacher or building a house, shall be referred to the church for final action. It is understood that the church itself is the final authority in all matters pertaining to its own methods of procedure, when there is no Scripture command or precedent.

14. A majority of any board membership shall be required in order to transact business.

15. It is important that an annual meeting of the church membership be held at the close of each year. At this meeting reports for the year shall be made in writing, of all the work done by the church. Plans for the coming year are to be laid and the time set for the newly elected officers to be properly ordained or installed.

16. The election of officers is fully discussed on pages 110-117. The subject deserves more thorough attention than can be given here in a paragraph.

17. At the first regular meeting of the board or boards in any new year, the members thereof shall reorganize by electing the board officers as heretofore stated.

18. It generally is best to have it understood that the minister called by the church is not only to preach, but is to be the general advisor and counselor of the congregation in all its departments, activities and conferences.

His advice should be sought in all policies of the church, that the congregation's life and work may be properly co-ordinated. The minister should keep his plans made well ahead.

19. This series of points in the procedure of the church may be modified and amended at any time by the board, and if such modification affects the congregation the change should be submitted for general approval.

Concerning the Foregoing Points

It will be noticed in these points of procedure that there is ample provision made to amend them as there may be need. It will be observed also that these points provide for the establishing of the general plan outlined in this book, but there is nothing compulsory. When the plan shall have been adopted by the board, it should be presented to the church for ratification. After adoption, the items of the ratified plan should be entered upon the regular books by the church clerk. They thus become the accepted and acceptable expedient for the government of the affairs of the local congregation. These should be followed, or else amended and then followed, so that everything may be done "in decency and in order."

It has been said again and again that the so-called crime waves that sweep across

our country are due to disrespect for law. There can be but little doubt that the cause of disrespect for law is the fact that we exercise but feeble discipline in our homes and in the churches. The church, above all establishments, should be characterized by order and by respect for system in the conduct of its affairs.

Questions On Lesson X.

1. If any church is careless and unsystematic in the conduct of its affairs, what is the first thing necessary to its betterment?

2. Why should a church proceed with care and tact in making the necessary changes from disorganization to system?

3. Describe two ways in which changes necessary to better organization may be brought about.

4. Why is it a good idea to work out or adopt some definite, clearly stated points of procedure in organizing or reorganizing a church?

5. If a church needs such a reform in its methods, what would it be well for the preacher to do, by way of beginning?

Establishing a Program

6. What, in your opinion, are some of the more essential of the nineteen suggested points of procedure?

7. Why is it necessary to make it perfectly plain that this is but a suggested course, and not to be considered authoritative?

8. After the plan is thoroughly worked out by the board and adapted to the use of the local congregation, why should it be submitted to the church for adoption?

9. Why is it important for churches to be more careful in their system of government?

LESSON XI.

THE SMALL CHURCH

Its Life and Problems

1. The Major Problem.

Every Church has its problems. The small church is no exception unless its problems are more baffling than others. Perhaps its greatest difficulty is in securing efficient leadership. There was a time when the rural churches and most all small congregations could not afford to be too exacting with regard to an educated ministry. In this day of wonderful progress and privilege the small, outlying church has to command more than mediocre ability in the pulpit in order to get attention.

There are citizens in most every community who are college graduates or high-school graduates. They expect and demand leaders with some educational culture. This creates a problem for the small church, because it

The Small Church

is not financially strong enough to command a ministry of sufficient ability to build up the congregation. If members of the little church could be taught to be better givers and the educated preachers taught to be less city-minded, this problem would be easier of solution. There are communities where small churches are able to command the services of able preachers for one or two Sundays in the month. Some such churches are doing excellent work under the ministry of young men who are students preparing for the ministry in near-by colleges.

Many a young man entering the ministry would do well to begin with a rural church, and many a rural church would do well to employ a young man still in college or just graduating.

There should be little difference in the work of the officers of the small and the larger churches except that the program of the small church will be simplified and reduced.

An elder is an elder whether in a little or a big church, the same being true of all other officers. Every one must study to discharge his duties to the kingdom in the

very best possible way. It would be well if the officers of the large church could know how to do the work in the little church, and vice versa.

2. Four Types of Churches.

It was the Lord Himself who said: "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them" (Matt. 18:20). Surely, then, the Lord is with the small group if its members are met in His name.

When we say "small" church we mean one with less than two hundred members. There are at least four kinds of little churches to be dealt with. First, the one that is active and growing; second, the one that is at a standstill; third, the one that is slowly dying; fourth, the one that is dead, not having any services at all.

Every community in the city, village or country needs a New Testament church, whether it be big, medium-sized or little. The community needs such a church in order that every one may know of the New Testament plea and plan for Christian unity. The community needs such a church in order that those young people who would go to the

larger centers may be prepared to preach and teach and live the simple faith of the New Testament Scriptures.

(a) *The Small Church that Is Growing.*—This type of church has reason for much hope. It is doing the work our Lord intended. If all goes well, it may do a large work in time, but whether it does or not, it will be a blessing to its community.

There are evidences of the return of sentiment favorable to the strengthening of rural churches. Automobiles make it easy to travel great distances, and city people are beginning to turn back to the health-giving charm of God's great out-of-doors. Country people should study to make the services attractive and worshipful in the old neighborhood church, and should improve and beautify the buildings. Make it worth while for visitors to come from far and near to worship in the old home community.

(b) *The Small Church that Is at a Standstill.*—There are many small rural churches that are, or seem to be, dead. But sometimes they are simply victims of neglect and are at a standstill. They are dormant. The church in the county-seat should investigate

all such cases in the county, and should revive every small congregation that can be brought back to activity. It is not a credit to the cause of Christ for the strong churches to let the small ones die of neglect. Every closed church should be reopened and its services revived, or else the property should be sold and the money turned over to a worthy cause.

(c) *The Small Church that Is Slowly Dying.*—The third class of small churches are those that are slowly dying. Members move away. Interest wanes. Other members go to the county-seat church. At first the Sunday school drags. There is preaching only once in a long time. Members begin to talk about giving up. Later they do give up. Once in awhile there is a crowd at a funeral.

This likewise is a case for the county-seat church to look after. A State or county or district evangelist should take such a church in hand and reanimate it. Every employed preacher should be big-hearted enough to donate his time in a meeting with such a dying church and bring it back to life. There will be difficulties, but he may solve them.

(d) *The Small Church that Is Dead*.—In reviving the standstill church, the slowly dying church and the church that apparently is dead, there are difficulties of an unbelievable variety to be overcome.

So many and so different are the circumstances that the best brains and most consecrated personalities available are necessary to accomplish what should be done.

A thorough knowledge of all that has been treated in the earlier chapters of this book will be necessary, and it may be applied according to the exigencies of each case and best judgment of those who are concerned. Sometimes the "dead" church should be buried; sometimes raised; sometimes sold and the money given to missions; sometimes doctored as if it were a newly born infant.

But do not pronounce an old church as dead unless it really is dead. The church of Jesus Christ is the conservator of all that is best in community life, and residents should be exceedingly careful not to let a once active congregation die in their midst.

3. Organizing the Small Church.

The organization or reorganization of a small church is simply a large plan brought

to a small scale. The method can be adapted from the plans discussed in earlier pages.

Generally the small church can have at least three elders and six deacons.

To begin the rotation plan, one elder and two deacons can be elected for a term of one year, one elder and two deacons for a term of two years, and one elder and two deacons for a term of three years.

After the plan is in operation, one elder and two deacons will be elected each year for a term of three years.

The imperative thing in rural church communities is to stand by and stand up for the local church.

4. Making It Go.

Talk the church up—never talk it down. Study to devise things interesting instead of telling the world that the church is dead. Give the young people a chance to revive the quality of the services, and ten chances to one they will undertake it and succeed.

There is a book, "Lord's Day Worship Services," that deals helpfully with the problem of the weak and struggling church, and the different publishers have a varied line of books that will serve you well.

The Rural Small Church

1. Changed Conditions.

In all phases of its life the modern rural church is so different from the country church of fifty years ago that there is almost no way to compare them.

The country people of modern times are becoming city-minded, and many of them are looking forward to the time when they can move to the city. Country churches are being bled white by the loss of interest or by the lack of sufficient strength to keep going.

The automobile and good roads, instead of bringing people to the rural church, are taking them away from it, and the radio offers a plausible alibi to those who claim they can enjoy a better church service by staying at home.

2. The Changes Should Be Advantages.

The country church and community have advantages that no city can duplicate. The best should be made of them.

(a) *There is a charm about God's great out-of-doors* that lays hold upon something elemental in human nature. By making the most of rural attractions those who live in

the country can turn the urban attention toward the farming community, but farmers themselves *must stand up for farm life*.

Reverent and attractive services in the rural church, and the exercise of sincere hospitality on the part of rural church-members, will make attendance there a delight.

(b) *The opportunity for normal character-building* is much better in country homes and churches than anywhere else.

On the farm there is a freedom that children like. There is a continuous chance for growing boys and girls to exercise initiative, bear responsibilities and develop distinct individuality.

The rural church has the finest possible opportunity to help the children and young people to see that in the country they are partners with God in developing the forces of nature.

(c) *There are more children in country homes* than in city homes, and home life is more intimate.

This means that the church has especial access to the heart life of its people. The growing tendency of the city to hive its dwellers in apartments chokes the finer sen-

timents and is not conducive to the highest type of family life. The rural church is particularly like a family, and has a chance to conserve the best that is in human nature as no other institution can do.

(d) *Community life means more in rural areas* because the people of a country neighborhood are interdependent.

Farmers help one another, live in similar conditions and have similar interests. They understand one another.

The country church and country church preacher together can work wonders in the way of building a program that will make the church the community center. In every way that makes for moral and spiritual betterment they have the opportunity to make good.

Questions on Lesson XI.

1. Why is the problem of leadership one of the most important and most baffling to the average church?

2. Within the last few generations, what change has taken place in the matter of an educated ministry?

3. Is it, or is it not, important for the minister to be an educated man?

4. When is it possible for a minister's education to be a disadvantage to the church?

5. If a preacher's education has resulted in his abandoning the faith, what should be done about it?

6. Why is it difficult for the rural or the small church to secure a minister?

7. What experiences are small churches having with students that are in seminaries?

8. What are the four kinds of small churches that compel our attention, and what should be done with each of them?

9. Why is the small, community church needed?

10. What effect is the automobile having upon rural church attendance?

11. How can the rural church itself make its services more attractive?

12. Could not many a rural church be revived if the Christianity of the rural communities were revived?

13. Give four strong arguments for the continued maintenance of the rural church.

LESSON XII.

THE HOUSE OF THE LORD

The Place Where the Church Assembles

1. Should Be a Place of Beauty.

“Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it” (Ps. 127:1).

Keeping this Scripture fact in mind would avoid many a blunder. Of course, in the primary sense, the real local church is the group of people who are banded together in a given community as “the Lord’s body.” The assembly of the saints is the church. But the house in which they meet for worship is by common custom called the church, also, and as such its architecture, beauty and usableness should conform to the noble purposes which Christ’s followers have been commanded to carry out.

There once was a time when a plain, oblong room, with fairly comfortable pews and an entrance and a belfry, was sufficient to

meet the simple needs and humble ideals of the worshipers.

But the century between 1850 and 1950 will go down in history as having been marked by many changes and adjustments.

2. A Place for Spiritual Instruction.

Emphasis has shifted from formal worship to Christian education, and then forward another notch to include both. It now is acknowledged that the problem of skillful Christian teaching is one of the greatest the church has to face.

Teachers in public schools and colleges are equipped with highly specialized training. Children and young people see and know this. They also know that for the most part teachers in the Bible schools are not so well prepared. Boys and girls conclude that the Bible is not so important as geography, grammar and mathematics.

The fact that Sunday-school pupils have classes in Bible study thirty minutes a week, and public-school and college pupils study the "common branches" of education from twenty to thirty hours a week, makes it still more difficult to impress upon young people the importance of Bible study.

Elders, deacons, preachers and parents as well as Sunday-school teachers and officers must stress the teaching function of the church and the home, and church buildings must be built or rebuilt with the view to the best results in teaching the word of God to young and old. There are architects who specialize in church buildings, and plans are easily available. It is much easier to change a few lines on paper than to change a wall, partition or room.

3. Skillful Teaching and Right Emphasis.

If graded instruction is best and most satisfactory in general education, then it is the most satisfactory in the acquisition of Scripture knowledge, provided the new method is not destructive of faith. Every church building should be so constructed as to enable teachers to do their best work in imparting knowledge of the Scriptures.

Most churches of Christ are provided with baptisteries, but only of late years have church architects sought to make the baptistery one of the most beautiful spots in the building.

The most fitting church architecture will focus the worshipers' attention upon the pul-

pit stand where lies the word of God, upon the baptistery where the obedient are "baptized into Christ," and upon the Lord's table where the emblems of His suffering and death are spread. Church buildings easily can be so built or remodeled as to create the effect we are describing.

In these days the architects of church buildings know just how baptisteries are best planned and built. You should see to it that yours is one of the best in every way. No church preparing to build or rebuild can afford to be careless in the choice of an architect.

4. All Things Planned Wisely.

By all means make provision to warm the water in the baptistery. It is not wise to take a candidate from the atmosphere of a warm room into a pool of icy water.

In a church building there should be a minister's study and an office. The office is devoted to secretarial work and the systematic care of the business which the management of the congregation's growth requires.

The main room for worship, which we usually call the auditorium, should be com-

fortably seated with pews, should be carpeted, and, if possible, used exclusively for worship and for services of Christian culture. The beauty of the windows and walls should be such as to contribute to a worshipful state of mind.

Much care should be exercised in selecting the site of the church building. It ought to be the best located building in the community, and after it is built the grounds are to be made and kept beautiful. Let nothing ever be allowed to cheapen the effect or the influence of the church of Jesus Christ.

When building the church it is wise to consult the best financiers available. Seek their advice in the matter of securing and floating loans, if loans are needed. The same kind of business sense is necessary in erecting a church as that required in putting up a mercantile block.

On the day of dedication it is customary to have a very special and carefully prepared program. There are a few men whose services are in demand as dedicators because they are good at raising money. The best plan is to have practically all the money

provided for beforehand, so that the building may be dedicated out of debt. In any event the people should be made to feel that the money spent in putting up the church is an investment and not a donation to charity.

5. Youth and the Future.

Not only must fitting provision be made for the teaching of the children, but the modern church is under obligation to win, hold, train, direct and encourage young people in the development of Christian character. If the young people are given a chance, they will be the bulwark of the church. In fact, the church will have a future in proportion as it conserves the youth of the present.

In our modern life we have found it both good and necessary at least to take an interest in wholesome recreation. Young people have associated together since the dawn of time, and it is vastly better for the church to provide wholesome recreation under wise and sympathetic direction than to turn their amusement life over to the chaperonage of the devil.

It is a matter, however, for each church to work out according to its resources and its best judgment.

The task of the elders and deacons of the present-day church is such a challenge to their best ability that it is not easy to express it in terms that are strong enough. Our hope is that every one of them who studies this book will be helped to greater vision and higher attainments.

Questions on Lesson XII.

1. To what extent should the builders of a house of worship pay attention to its architectural and artistic proportions, as well as to its usability?

2. Why is not the old-time, oblong audience-room not sufficient for all the demands of the modern church and Bible school?

3. Name the changes that have taken place in the needs of the local congregation within the last fifty years.

4. Why do the children and young people of to-day expect the Bible to be taught with skill and ability?

5. When children and young people see Bible teaching limited to thirty minutes a week while the common branches of education are given thirty hours, how are they impressed?

6. In a newly built or remodeled church, where should the congregation's attention be centered?

7. To what extent should the present-day church be adapted to work as well as to worship?

8. Why secure the services of the best architects and financiers in the building or rebuilding of a church?

9. What provision should be made by the present-day church for holding and training its young people?

SIMPLIFIED PARLIAMENTARY USAGE IN THE CONDUCT OF BUSINESS

I. How to Proceed

1. Quorum.

Deliberative bodies and all other groups decide upon a certain number of members who constitute a quorum. The English Parliament and House of Commons, the United States Senate and House of Representatives, and all smaller bodies that transact business, decide upon a quorum that must be present in order to proceed. The board of church officers may decide upon its own quorum according to the size of the Board.

(a) *Size of Quorum*.—Unless there is a special rule fixing the number, a quorum of any group is a majority of all its members. It is usually wise, however, to adopt a much smaller quorum number in a large organization.

(b) *Important Business*.—While a quorum is competent to transact any business, it

is not expedient to transact *important* business unless there is a fair attendance at the meeting, or unless previous notice of such business has been given.

The Chairman should not take the chair until a quorum is present. If, after a time, a quorum does not arrive, he may take the chair and adjourn the meeting.

2. Order of Business.

(a) *Usual Order*.—The following is the usual order in a religious business meeting. It may be varied at the discretion of the Chairman:

1. Call to order.
2. Devotional exercises.
3. Reading and approval of minutes.
4. Reports of standing committees.
5. Reports of special committees.
6. Unfinished business.
7. New and miscellaneous business.
8. Adjournment.

(b) *Special Business*.—When the time has arrived to which certain business has been especially assigned, this business is called up, but it may be postponed by vote.

(c) When a subject has been especially assigned to a particular meeting, this matter

takes precedence over all other business except reading the minutes.

II. Routine Business

3. The Call to Order.

When the hour arrives for the meeting the Chairman, standing, says: "The meeting will come to order."

4. Devotional.

Immediately after the call to order, the Chairman will lead the meeting in prayer or will designate some one else. The devotional period may be short or extended, according to the discretion of the Chairman.

5. The Reading and Approval of Minutes.

After prayer, the Chairman says: "The Secretary will read the minutes of the last meeting."

If any one notices an error in the minutes, he should state the fact. In case an error is noticed, the Chairman, without waiting for a motion, directs the Secretary to make the needed correction. Usually the Chairman asks if there is any correction to be made, and then says, "If there is no objection, the minutes stand approved as read." or "stand approved as corrected."

6. Reports of Committees.

The Chairman next calls for the reports of committees by saying: "The next business in order is the reports of committees." He then may proceed to call the names of the various standing committees in the order of their importance.

The Chairman next calls for reports from the special committees.

(a) *Form of Reports.*—The form of a report of a standing committee generally is this: "The —— committee respectfully reports as follows," or "begs leave to submit the following report."

A special committee often adopts the following form: "The committee to which was referred [state the matter here] begs leave to submit the following report," or "Your [name committee] would respectfully report as follows." The report usually closes with the words "Respectfully submitted," and is followed by the signatures of all the members of the committee concurring in the report, or sometimes is signed only by the Chairman of the committee.

(b) *Reception of Reports.*—The Chairman of a committee usually reads the report,

though any other member of the committee may do so. He reads it standing in his place and then hands it to the Secretary.

The formality of a motion and vote to "receive" the report usually may be dispensed with.

To "receive" a report is simply to introduce it. A very common error is, after a report has been read, to move that it be "received," when the mover really means to adopt.

(c) *Adoption of Reports.*—After a report has been read, the question comes up as to its adoption. The Chairman may say, "What shall be done with the report?" or "What is your pleasure with reference to this report?" Some member rises and says, "I move its adoption." Some one else "seconds" the motion. Then the Chairman says, "It has been moved and seconded that the report which has been read be adopted." The merits of the report are then open for discussion. If no one rises to speak, the Chairman puts the motion as follows: "The question is on the adoption of the report. As many as favor its adoption will say aye." After the ayes have responded, the Chairman says, "As

many as are of a contrary opinion," or "As many as are opposed will say no."

The result is announced somewhat as follows: "The motion is carried and the report is adopted." If the motion is not carried, the result is announced by "The motion is lost; the report is rejected."

(d) *Expediting Business*.—Much of the formality often may be dispensed with, and the Chairman may expedite business, by putting the question without waiting for a motion if no one objects; or he may not even take a vote on the question. In such case he merely announces that, if there be no objection, the adoption of the report shall be considered the action of the Board.

If, however, any one objects, the question must be decided by a formal vote. This simple method of procedure safely and profitably may be adopted in transacting the ordinary business of the Board.

(e) *Committee Discharged*.—A special committee having reported, and the report having been disposed of, ceases to exist as a committee. In such case a motion to "discharge the committee" is unnecessary. If the report is but partial, a motion to "dis-

charge the committee from further consideration of the subject” may be made.

III. Introduction of Business

7. Making a Motion.

All new or miscellaneous business of the Board usually is introduced by a motion of some member, or by the presentation of some communication, or by both.

(a) *Introducing Business.*—Any member wishing to bring business before the Board rises, and, standing in his place, addresses the Chairman, who recognizes him by announcing his name. Sometimes the Chairman recognizes a speaker merely by bowing to him.

Where two or more rise at the same time to present an item of business the Chairman must decide who is entitled to the floor. This he does by announcing the member’s name. The one recognized, having “obtained the floor,” will introduce, by a motion, statement, resolution or otherwise, such business as he desires to present.

The presiding officer always should be addressed by his official title, “Mr. Chairman.”

(b) *Seconding a Motion*.—A motion must be formally “seconded,” which means that it is approved by some member who says that he “seconds the motion,” before it properly can be brought before the Board for consideration or action. If a matter is mere routine and should go without discussion, sometimes it is admitted without being seconded.

(c) *Main Question*.—Any measure introduced for adoption by a motion as mentioned above is called the “main question” or “principal motion,” and should be submitted in writing, unless it is brief and simple in form.

(d) No “principal motion” can be made when any other question is “before the house.”

Ordinarily a motion can not be made while another member “has the floor.”

8. Special Committees.

Preliminary work in the preparation of matter to be acted upon in the Board is done by means of committees. When these committees are appointed for a special purpose upon any particular occasion, they are called “Special Committees.” Their work should be done promptly and well.

The action of a committee, judiciously selected, quite often decides the action of the Board, and justly so, for a committee has opportunities for deliberation and investigation that the board as a whole has not. By this means much time is saved and much confusion is avoided.

(a) *The Appointing of Special Committees.*—A motion to appoint a special committee may include the number composing the committee and the manner of appointing the same. In case a motion does not include any specification as to the number to be appointed or as to the manner of appointing, the Chairman inquires, “How shall the committee be appointed?” He then acts in accordance with the pleasure of the Board. The matter, however, may be decided informally, the Chairman appointing the committee without special instructions.

(b). *Constituting a Committee.*—The mover of a motion to constitute a committee, and the one that seconds the motion, by courtesy are appointed on the committee. The various features of a matter committed should be represented by the appointment of members interested in those features.

(c) *Committee Chairman*.—The first member named on a committee becomes the chairman, and it is his duty to call together the committee and preside at the committee meetings. If from any cause he fails or declines to call a meeting, it is the duty of the committee to assemble on the call of any two of its members.

(d) *Constituting a Quorum*.—A majority of the members of a committee is regarded as necessary to constitute a quorum of that committee.

(e) *Rules of Committee*.—The rules of the Board, in the main, are applied to each committee meeting.

No allusion should be made in the Board to what occurred in the committee meeting, except it be by report of the committee.

IV. Stating and Putting Questions

9. Stating the Question.

Whenever a motion has been made and seconded, it is the duty of the Chairman, if the motion is in order, to announce it so that the meeting may know what question is before its members. This formal announcement is called "stating the question."

A motion made and seconded should be “stated” by the Chairman at once, and until so stated it is not in order for any other motion to be made or for any member to “speak to it”; that is, to debate its merits.

(a) *Suggested Alterations*.—This rule, however, does not preclude pertinent suggestions as to alterations before the question is stated. Much time may be saved and business expedited by such informal remarks, which, however, must never be allowed to run into debate.

(b) *State Motion Correctly*.—The Chairman should see that each question is correctly stated. It may be necessary sometimes for him to explain the motion pending in order that members may be able to deliberate and vote intelligently.

(c) *How Motion Is Stated*.—A common form of stating a question is to say: “It is moved and seconded that” and then give the motion or its substance, at least. In case of a resolution or report, it may be stated thus: “The question is on the adoption of the resolution or report, which is read.”

(d) *Withdrawal of a Motion*.—After a motion has been made, or even if it has been

seconded, provided it has not been stated as a question, it is admissible for the maker of the motion to modify or withdraw the same, either of his own choice or at the instance of the Chairman or some other member.

When the mover modifies his motion, however, the one who seconded the motion may, if he wishes, withdraw his second. Usually the mover asks the consent of the member who seconded the motion, in case he wishes to modify the same before it is stated.

A motion "stated" can not be withdrawn without unanimous consent. Where no one objects to the withdrawal, the Chairman grants permission. In case any one objects, a motion to obtain leave for such withdrawal becomes necessary. When a motion is withdrawn, the effect is the same as if it never had been made.

10. Putting the Question.

(a) *Getting Ready to Vote.*—Before putting a question to vote, the Chairman asks, "Are you ready for the question?" He may ask, "Are there any remarks?"

If the question is discussed, the Chairman, when he thinks the discussion is closed,

again inquires, "Are you ready for the question?" If no one then indicates a desire to speak further, the Chairman once more states the question as already described and puts it to a vote.

(b) *A Common Form*.—One very common form of putting the question is: "As many as are in favor of the motion will say aye," and after the affirmative voice is expressed, "Those opposed will say no."

Another form is for the Chairman to say, "Those in favor of the motion will hold up the right hand." "Those opposed will manifest it by the same sign."

V. The Vote

11. Taking the Vote.

The vote may be taken by the responses "aye" and "no," and when thus taken it is called a *viva-voce* vote, or it may be taken by raising the right hand or by rising or by ballot.

(a) *To Make a Perfect Question*.—Both the affirmative and negative sides must be duly put and the vote declared.

If the affirmative vote prevails, the Chairman should announce the result: "The mo-

tion is carried," or he may say, "The ayes have it and the motion prevails." If the negative vote prevails, the announcement is as follows: "The motion is lost," or "The noes have it."

(b) *After the Vote Is Taken.*—If the Chairman has any doubt as to the majority of voices, the members being almost equally divided on the question, he may put the question the second time before declaring the result.

(c) *Division.*—If, when the Chairman has decided a vote according to his judgment, some member rises and states that he "doubts the vote" or calls for a "division," it is the duty of the Chairman to say: "A division is called for. Those in favor of the motion will rise." After counting those who rise and announcing the number, he requests them to be seated. Then he says: "Those opposed will rise." These he counts and announces the number. He then declares the motion carried or lost, as the case may be.

The Chairman may count the vote himself, or appoint tellers to make the count. When tellers make the count, they agree as to numbers and report the same to the Chair-

man, who thereupon declares the result. Tellers should be selected from both sides of the question.

(d) *A Tie Vote*.—When there is a tie vote, the motion is lost. In case of a tie, the Chairman may or may not give the casting vote, just as he chooses. He may vote in the affirmative, in which case the motion prevails. He may vote in the negative or refuse to vote, defeating the motion.

(e) *Voting by Ballot*.—The Board may find it at times expedient to vote by ballot. In such cases, the Chairman appoints at least two tellers, who distribute slips of paper upon which each member, including the chairman, writes his vote. The tellers collect the ballots and count them under the supervision of the Chairman, and announce the result.

(f) *Election by Ballot*.—In case of an election of officers by ballot, the Chairman announces the result somewhat as follows: “The number of votes cast is ——. The number necessary to election is ——. Mr. A. received — votes; Mr. B. received — votes. Mr. C. received — votes. Mr. A., having received the required number, is

elected.” A more formal declaration of his election may follow. If no candidate received the requisite number of votes, there is no election, and the vote must be taken again.

VI. Discussion and Decorum

12. Discussion of Questions.

Only such discussion should be engaged in as will actually promote and expedite the transaction of business, and in no case should it be forgotten that harmony is more to be desired than correct parliamentary usage. Orderly conduct is certainly commendable, but undue attention to extreme formalities or extended discussion is not advisable.

With this preliminary caution as to the employment of debate in the business meeting, some parliamentary rules as to decorum and the proper discussion of questions follow.

(a) *When Motion May Be Discussed.*—It is not in order formally to discuss a motion until after the motion has been stated by the Chairman. Merely asking a question or making a suggestion is not considered in the line of discussion. Extended remarks, however, are out of place.

(b) *Speaking on a Motion*.—A member, desiring to speak on the motion before the Board, rises and addresses the Chairman, who gives him the floor by announcing his name, after which the speaker proceeds.

All remarks should be addressed to the Chairman and confined to the question under consideration. During the discussion the member should not introduce irrelevant matter. This is “out of order.” The Chairman should kindly inform the speaker of the fact and ask him to “speak to the question.”

(c) *Length of Discussion*.—A limit as to time employed in the discussion of a question is, of course, governed largely by circumstances, but brevity is greatly to be coveted at all times. Lengthy discussions as a rule are decidedly unprofitable.

13. Decorum.

(a) *Courtesy in Discussion*.—Members should never be lacking in Christian courtesy one to another in the discussion of any and all questions. No personalities should be allowed to blind any one to the broad purposes of the promotion and general welfare of the Board and the congregation and the cause for which they unitedly stand.

In discussing questions all reflections upon members of the Board or upon any one's motives should be strictly avoided. Discuss the measure and not the member or members who may oppose your views.

A member should always be accorded courteous attention while speaking. No member should disturb by whispering, laughing, walking across the floor, or in any way causing confusion.

(b) *Rising to Point of Order.*—When a speaker is in error he should readily and cheerfully yield to any well-meant corrections on the part of the Chairman. It is not well, however, to be too punctilious in making points of order.

(c) *Personal Reference.*—In referring to another member, it is usual to avoid using his name. Rather refer to him as “The brother who spoke last” or “The brother on my right,” or in any other way that will describe or indicate him.

The officers of the Board usually are referred to by their official titles.

(d) *The Chairman's Place.*—The chairman is not supposed to participate actively in the discussion of questions. He, from the

chair, may state general matters of fact within his knowledge or give helpful information.

VII. Modification or Amendment

14. Amendments.

An amendment is a proposed modification or change of a question under consideration, but it must have a direct bearing upon the question to which it relates.

(a) *How to Amend*.—An amendment is usually effected by a motion to “add” certain words or to “strike out” certain words, or to “strike out certain words and insert others” in their stead. An amendment must be moved and seconded as any other proposition before it can be acted upon.

(b) *Accepting Amendment*.—The mover of the proposition to which the amendment relates may “accept” or “consent” to the amendment, which then is incorporated in and becomes a part of the original proposition without any vote being taken upon it. If, however, any objection is raised, a motion is necessary to obtain consent.

(c) *Amendment to the Amendment*.—There may be an amendment to the amend-

ment, but this is the limit. "An amendment to an amendment" can not be amended.

The terms "primary amendment" and "secondary amendment" may be used in this connection, the first applying to the simple amendment, the second to the amendment to the amendment.

(d) *Voting on Amended Question.*—In putting to vote a question with amendments pending, the amendment must be put before the principal motion. An amendment to an amendment must be put before the first amendment.

The main motion, the primary amendment, and a secondary amendment, all may be pending at the same time. They are voted upon in the reverse order, as follows: first, the secondary amendment; second, the primary amendment as amended; finally, the main question as amended.

If the decision on the second amendment is negative, the question recurs to the first amendment, and if this be decided in the negative, the question recurs on the main question. If a secondary amendment be carried and the primary amendment fail, the original motion alone remains to be voted upon.

If, of the two amendments, the primary only be carried, then the question recurs on the main question as amended.

(e) *Voting on Amendment*.—In putting an amendment to vote, the Chairman reads the passage to be amended as it stands; then reads the words proposed; and, lastly, reads the whole passage as it will stand if the amendment is adopted. He then says something like this: “The question is on the amendment offered by so and so.” Then he puts the question to vote in the usual form.

As soon as the vote is taken, the Chairman should announce the question that then is before the Board. For example, after an amendment to an amendment is carried, he will say, “The question is now on the amendment as amended,” and puts the vote. Following this he says, “The question now recurs on the original motion,” or “The original motion as amended.” He then puts the question in the usual way.

(f) *Striking Out*.—On putting a motion to “strike out” words, Chairman says: “It is moved to amend by striking out the words [naming the words]. Shall these words stand as part of the principal motion?”

(g) *Substitute*.—One motion may be substituted for another on the same subject, or to which it is relevant.

15. A Division of a Question.

When a motion is composed of two or more parts so distinct as to admit of separate consideration, it is usual to amend the original motion by calling for a “division of the question,” or by a motion to that effect. The person calling for or moving a division of the question may state how he desires the division made, or the Chairman may make the division upon his own judgment. The reason for dividing the question is in order to get a separate vote on any particular point or points involved.

16. Paragraphs.

In considering any report or proposition containing several paragraphs or sections, each of which it is deemed wise to consider separately, the whole paper should be read entirely through by the Secretary, then the Chairman should read it, or have it read, by paragraphs, pausing at the end of each, and asking, “Are there any amendments proposed to this paragraph?” Amendments, if any, are then offered on the paragraph read.

The Chairman then reads the next paragraph, or directs the same to be read, and proceeds with this as in the former case; and so on to the end. He finally puts the question on agreeing to or adopting the paper as a whole, whether amended or not.

If each paragraph is adopted separately while under consideration, it is improper afterwards to vote on the adoption of the paper as a whole, as this would be voting to adopt what has been already adopted in detail.

VIII. Special Duties of Officers

17. The Chairman.

The Chairman may give wholesome counsel and make helpful suggestions, but should not be partisan. He should be listened to with due consideration.

(a) *Routine*.—In routine business it is not necessary for the Chairman to wait for a motion when he knows the Board favors the question. It is necessary for him to put business through with dispatch.

(b) *A Wrong Motion*.—When an improper motion is made, it is well for the

Chairman kindly and tactfully to assist in its correction rather than harshly to rule it out of order.

(c) *Talkative Chairman*.—The Chairman should avoid the habit of talking too much. It is his province to direct and facilitate proceedings, and it does not help matters for the Chairman to interrupt.

(d) *Chairman Voting*.—The Chairman is entitled to vote when the vote is by ballot, and in all other cases where his vote would change the result.

A motion which refers directly and especially to the Chairman should be put to vote by the maker of the motion.

18. The Secretary.

The Secretary should be stationed near the Chairman, and should keep a record of what is done. Every resolution or motion that is adopted should be entered on the minutes.

It is not in the province of the Secretary to write criticisms or comments into the minutes.

The Secretary has charge of all papers and documents belonging to the Board. He should stand while reading.

The Secretary should furnish the chairman of each committee with names of members appointed and other details that are matters of record.

19. The Treasurer.

The Treasurer of the church should, from time to time, as the Board sees fit, make a full report of all money received and expended, and so classify the report as to enable the Board clearly to understand his statements. A simple statement will give a list of the receipts, a list of expenditures, and will state balance in hand. The Treasurer can not be too careful in keeping his accounts.

IX. Closing the Meeting

20. Closing Exercises.

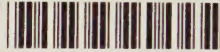
Elsewhere in this book are statements concerning the regular closing of a Board meeting. Both the opening and closing should be devotional and in harmony with the work for which the Board is in existence.

The meeting closes by a motion to adjourn, which motion always is in order except when another member "has the floor."

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